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HIS PIRATE CREW

-:- Or, -:-

Law in the Cabin.

By Victor Ardmore

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CHAPTER I.

THE window shades had been lowered and the lamp lighted, and Doctor Hillson was happily perusing the first lines of an article in his newspaper. Not having any pressing need for money, it always gratified him when his patients were sufficiently thoughful not to require his attention after night fall. Now, the prospect of a quiet period before bedtime was very alluring. Certainly, fate was unkind if a doctor could never have an evening to himself like other men.

San Francisco, at that time, was not celebrated for quiet. Only a comparatively few years had elapsed since the Forty-niners had wrenched California out of the jaws of obscurity. Hillson had come to the coast close on the heels of the first of the gold-seekers, had secured a good practice, and fought his way to success. He had acquired a love for the new land, and was not troubled by its wildness. If he was content to confine his operations to medical work, he was, at the same time, keenly interested in some of the outcomes of that same wildness.

And the outcomes, among other things, were schemes as wild as the young land, with men trying for fortunes without themselves handling the cradle or pick of the miner. These interested him, for they were the battles of human giants against the giants of chance and existing conditions.

The newspaper was as enlightening as it was crude when the Doctor had a caller. Fortunately, he was a healthy friend, not a patient, and he was warmly welcomed.

Mr. Peter Gladden entered. He was a

merchant of San Francisco, one of the first to handle goods there, and one of the first to acquire comparative wealth. He was big, plain, energetic, a man who grasped possibilities at the start and had the skill or the luck to get ahead. His big store was still doing a flourishing business, and the reputation of P. Gladden & Sons was excellent.

He and the Doctor met with the half-subdued heartiness of men of their unemotional kind, and conversation was commonplace for half an hour, but the merchant was not there to discuss ordinary things. When the clock struck nine he nodded as if in approval, knocked the ashes from his pipe and spoke deliberately.

"I'm going into something new."

"Ah!" Hillson returned. "A side issue, eh?"

"It will soon be the main issue, and the store the side one."

"I can hardly guess what it is."

"You certainly can't guess. Now, look here, Hillson, the Pacific Ocean is full of islands."

"I cannot deny that."

"Also of whales."

"Why, yes."

"There you get my project. Islands and whales."

"I don't think I follow you."

"Quite likely you don't, Doctor. Listen!"

Gladden leaned forward and waved his ponderous right hand to emphasize what was to follow. He was as incapable of enthusiasm as a rock, but his convictions were strong.

"Whale-oil is king!" he enunciated. "You are burning it in your reading lamp. Millions of other men are burning it tonight. It is the light of the nations. Tallow candles have been largely forced out of use. Now, what is the business process of whale-oil?"

"Why," replied Hillson, rather at a loss, "men go out in vessels, catch whales, secure the blubber, try it out, and take the oil home."

"Look into it closer. Let us suppose a whaling-ship is sent from New Bedford, Mass., to the Southern Pacific. Many weeks are required to sail along the coast of South America, double Cape Horn, and get to the right place for work. Then, when filled with oil, the ship has the long journey home. All told, many months are consumed in the voyage."

"Yes."

"A clumsy, expensive, inadequate method. Now, why not have united action by all whalers, a fleet made up in part of whale-killers and in part of tenders? Have stations on several islands, with elaborate works for trying out the oil. Now, when a vessel gets a whale or two it must let the rest of the school go and stop to try out on its own deck. By my way that vessel would do nothing more than to kill, and so, perhaps, secure a dozen whales before losing the school. As soon as one was taken the men on a tender would begin to cut up, get the blubber and take it to the nearest island b[illegible] would [illegible] [illegible] ex[illegible] doubtful."

"Well?" Gladden questioned.

"Isn't your scheme cumbersome? Whalers range over a vast territory of sea, and often cruise a long, long time without sighting a single whale. By your plan each one must be accompanied by a tender——"

"Why not?"

"I'm no whaler, myself, but it looks dubious to me."

"System does it, Doctor. Anything will succeed if properly planned. The hunters, the tenders, the island bases, all will work together harmoniously if the plan is right."

"If the plan is feasible, why wasn't it tried before now?"

"Why wasn't America discovered in the year 500, or before? Nothing is accomplished until the right man comes along to design it."

"I see."

"Now, when a vessel gets its hold filled with barrels of oil it has to sail for home, a distance of thousands of miles. By my plan that vessel can stay right on the whaling-grounds indefinitely, and keep on catching."

"But I've always understood there was difficulty in even getting enough oil to fill one ship."

"Sometimes, and then, on the other hand, sailors must often see a whole school of whales slip away from them because they have full holds."

"Well, if you see your way clear——"

"I do see it. I've associated two good men with me, namely, Luke Pearson, who once lived in New Bedford, and Horatio Marx, who is very familiar with the Pacific, and with the catching of whales."

"But the island bases——"

"I am to charter a ship immediately, take Pearson and Marx with me and sail to select the islands best fitted for my purpose."

"If you fail it will be a considerable loss——"

"I shall not fail!" and Mr. Gladden's jaws came together forcibly.

"I certainly wish you success, and possibly—but wait a bit! Back in Pennsylvania they have discovered an oily substance in the earth, and by pumping it out they get what is, when refined, a new kind of oil. I think they call it kerosene, and claim that it's better than whale-oil."

"Bosh!" Gladden commented. "Those fellows are crazy. No doubt they have found what they claim, but it can't be anything more than a little puddle. Pump oil out of the ground! Bosh! Pass that by. Hillson, there is more to say. You know that, in the East, they have constructed railroads."

"Yes."

"Well, that discovery is going to do away with the long journeys home of whalers. Railroads will be built from the Pacific coast straight east to Massachusetts, and all freight will go that way."

"A railroad across the continent, over the Rockies and the uninhabited plains?"

"Yes."

"That is an impossibility. Nature forbids."

"Nature will be conquered. Yes, exactly as our gang of Pacific pirates has just been conquered."

"That reminds me. If you sail now you may meet those pirates, and you know they are bloodthirsty murderers who gloat in adding the slaughter of human beings to their quest for plunder. A worse gang has never been afloat than the knaves who have infested our seas."

"Didn't the armed frigate General Scott whip them into nothing and sink their confounded ships?"

"The frigate did great work against them, sinking one, or possibly two, and one of the freebooter captains, Red Roger, was certainly killed, but nobody is sure that any further great damage was done. It isn't exactly safe to sail the Pacific when such pirates as 'Bussilion, Little Nero and Captain Blackington are alive. That Blackington is a demon."

Mr. Gladden waved a hand impatiently.

"Pass all this by. I admit that the pirates have been very active of late, and that they were dangerous before the fight with the General Scott, and may still have some fangs undrawn, but they don't scare me. As for Blackington, it is known that his ship, the Shooting Sword, was badly crippled in the fight, and probably sunk. Pass the pirates by. Now, my scheme is near to its active beginning. I am ready, and Pearson and Marx are ready. We sail soon."

"In what vessel?"

"I haven't selected one yet. Really active work will not begin until a fortnight later. Then I select my ship, my sailors, and fit out. It will be a combination of business and pleasure, and to that end I shall take my two daughters and a selected party along to get a scent of the deep sea. We shall all enjoy it hugely."

"Yes," the Doctor admitted. "Yes—unless you meet the pirates!"

CHAPTER II.

AT THE hour when the conversation took place in Doctor Hillson's room, a vessel and its crew were in jeopardy at a point off the coast some leagues south of San Francisco's headland. The night was [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] seamen under ordinary conditions.

This particular vessel was not favored with such conditions. It was deep in the water, and, slowly forced along by scanty sails bent to jury-masts, merely wallowed as it pushed its nose nearer land, inch by inch, a wounded animal of the sea.

Men were on her deck, and it was the only place open to them, for her whole under-body was full of water that brought her rails almost down to the level of the sea. Even a novice would have known that she was near to the point of sinking, and the expert sailors who manned her were keenly aware that she might dip and go under at any moment. They had reasons for holding to her as long as possible. They possessed no boat, and but little confidence in the raft they had constructed crudely out of inadequate material, nothing else being within reach.

One of their number, who was clean-shaven and lean of face, had stood looking sharply at the water beyond the hull when a second man approached him.

"I give her twenty minutes more, Captain," he said, uneasily.

"About that," was the quiet reply.

"Are we going to stay and be drowned like rats?"

"No."

"Then," and the questioner's voice took on an irritable note, "why don't we get away while we can?"

"Our raft is ready, with tackling adjusted so we can sway it over whenever we please. As I've told you before, I don't like to confide in that raft any sooner than is necessary. It may hold us up, but, really, I would not trust it to live in the sea. Where are we?"

"I don't know, Captain."

"How far can you see?"

"About forty feet."

"There you have it. If land is near we can't see it, and land may be a good twenty miles away. Two days we have jogged along, without compass or anything else to guide us. Where we are no man of us can tell. The moment we take to that raft we begin to strain her, and as we all admit that she will stand but limited knocking about in the sea, this wreck has seemed better than worse risks. Bah! I waste time in telling this, for you know it already. The chief question, Mr. Haggett, is, where is the coast of California?"

"Hanged if I know!"

"Hanged if any of us know. Still, we've got to get away from here, and further delay will be dangerous. Give the word to sway the raft over!"

"Bravo for you, Blackington!"

Haggett turned eagerly and gave the orders, and the men became busy. The vessel was sinking too low for occupancy, and the prospect for her final plunge accelerated every moment.

The situation of the men was desperate, but no honest observer would have given them strong sympathy. The ship was the Shooting Sword, one of the survivors of the attack of the Government frigate. In that fight the pirate had been mercilessly hammered, her masts partly shot away and her boats smashed, while one cannon ball had hulled her beyond repair. Water entered thru a yawning gap, and tho she had managed to creep away in the darkness of night, she had been a mere wreck.

When it was seen the breach in the under-body could not be mended, the survivors of the crew were set to work at the pumps. Thus far she had been kept afloat, but matters had reached the point where pumping was useless and the men worn out.

By the time it was known that the battle was lost they were cut off from the compass, and even the binnacle card was gone, so, in the two days of miserable struggling in fog, they had simply steered with the wind and hoped to fetch to the coast.

Never, they believed, had vessel been more completely wrecked, and seldom less at hand to do with in an emergency. Blackington knew now that he should have brought necessaries on deck at the beginning, but it was too late to feel regrets.

Urged on by the mate, the hands swayed the raft over, placed their few possessions aboard, and then they shoved clear. A mast was stepped and sail bent, and when they filled they drew slowly away from the doomed Shooting Sword. That she sank in a short time was certain, but her death-plunge was not to be witnessed in the darkness.

Blackington, never otherwise than self-possessed, was the quietest man there, but the sorest-hearted. They had food and drink for only twenty-four hours, tho in the depths of the submerged hull they left enough of both. Going they did not know where, they knew that starvation might be riding with them.

"Good-by to the old ship!" exclaimed one of the men, disconsolately.

"She has carried us many's the league," added a second pirate.

"And now see what has come to her! I'd like to get a crack at that frigate that shot the life out of her."

"Not me. We've seen too much of that frigate, already."

"I'm more interested in what's to become of us," said a third man.

"If we are [illegible] up by a so-called honest ship w[illegible] our [illegible] [illegible] if we're no[illegible] [illegible] shall starve."

"Cheer up, my gloomy lads!" Blackington broke in encouragingly. "I am expecting to make the land all right."

"We don't even know we have been steering for the coast."

"We started with a west wind astern, and we've kept it astern, and it's held true. We must have been steering for land."

"Suppose we do get to California. They will hang us."

"Not until they catch us."

"What is your plan, Captain?" asked Haggett.

"I've already told you all I know. If we make land we must be guided by circumstances. Once there we will see where we are, and take steps to get to sea again. Depend upon it, mates, we'll find a way out of that trouble. That doesn't worry me a bit."

He ran his eye over the raft. Given time and material, he could construct a thing of the kind as well as any man afloat, but neither had been theirs when they put the present affair together. Beset by a seriously rough sea it would soon go to pieces, and even the choppy water then around them was sure to try it severely.

"Now, man," he abruptly added, "let's not sit here like stumps. We are worn out with working at the pumps, and rest we must have. With the sail up and the wind astern this old box must drift one way and one only. Lie down, every man of you, and get back your strength for what is to come. Down! Your bed won't be exactly luxurious, but it will do. Stretch yourselves out!"

Nobody declined, and, not being men with nerves, all were soon asleep. Their situation was miserable, for their vessel was lost and their available earthly possessions were reduced to their clothing and a few crumbs of bread, but, murderers of the sea that they were, no decent man would have given pity to them then.

How long the raft lumbered along they never knew, but all awakened together when a heavy shock nearly rolled them from their frail support. They came to their feet, startled, but a glad shout quickly rose.

"Land!"

"Ha, my lads!" Blackington added cheerfully, "the sea has served us kindly. Land it is, and if it's the coast—grab the food and water and get ashore!"

The raft was beating against the obstruction, and they had no difficulty in leaving.

"Looks like the mainland," said the Captain.

"Maybe it's only a little island."

"We will learn right off. Day seems to be near, and the fog is lifting. Keep together, and we will march along until we see what is ahead of us. Keep together, I say."

They went two hundred yards and met with an unexpected experience. Their feet suddenly touched cultivated ground, and their spirits rose abruptly. Every evidence pointed to the fact that they were on the mainland, and it appealed to them then.

"Halt a bit!" Blackington advised. "We want to see where we are before going too far, and the view will soon be ours. The fog is lifting fast, and day is really with us. Wait until we can look ahead."

It was not a long delay. Objects came into view, and they saw before them a dozen buildings, all dwelling-houses except one. It was a little village, but peculiarities soon impressed them. No sign of life was to be seen, human being seemed astir, and neither dog nor fowl moved within sight. For a while they were perplexed, but the Captain suddenly stirred.

"Forward!" he directed. "I suspect that I understand this, but we shall know clearer when we have seen—well, forward!"

They went, and in a short time knew that no one was in the houses. Altho nearly new, they were wholly deserted.

"Some of you fellows looked scared, as if afraid of ghosts," said the leader, with a chuckle. "Calm yourselves. We have heard something about things in California. Now, my guess is that this town was hopefully started but that gold was found inland and all hands rushed away to dig the yellow stuff. Common thing in these parts. What interests us is, how long have they been gone? Is there food left? Make a minute search and see."

Investigation revealed nothing that could be eaten, and but little else of service to them. Except for the furniture, the houses had been nearly cleaned out when abandoned.

"Nothing worth worrying about, either," Blackington said composedly. "We have food enough for a day or so, and can find more. There must be wild game, and we have our pistols. We will take matters easy for a couple of hours, so as to watch the outlying country from this cover. We don't want to blunder into any trouble. This is California, the land where men lynch other folks if they disapprove of them. I take it for granted that you don't want to be lynched. Easy does it for two hours."

"Suppose, Captain, we re[illegible] California, what shall w[illegible] a sailor[illegible]

"Get [illegible]

"But [illegible] [illegible] get a[illegible] With so much [illegible] ment over go[illegible] [illegible]body is going to w[illegible] a ship very sharp."

"There is no ship near here."

"We will find one. Undoubtedly we are south of San Francisco, but by going there we can——"

"Why, we heard that many ships lie there at their piers, wholly abandoned by their crews, who have deserted to join the gold diggers. Just the chance for us!"

"Hardly!" Blackington retorted. "A ship without food or other necessaries would not fill the bill at all. We will seize one that is in good trim, fitted out for sea."

"Suppose the officers of law get us first? They must have heard of the battle between their vile frigate and our vessels."

"Yes, but they would never expect us to land on this coast. Right there is our chance. Why, with such a dearth of sailors in 'Frisco we can safely go there and ship at any time. Let time decide that. My first want is to learn what town this is, so I'll hunt thru it and try to find a letter, or, more to the point, an envelope. The address on it ought to settle that much. The rest of you, do what you please, except that the outlying region must be watched for unwelcome visitors. Axlon and Frisk, stand guard. I'll be with you soon again."

He went, but the abandoned letter was not easy to find. He had gone over all the houses when the remaining building came more pointedly to his attention.

"Looks like an office," he said to Haggett, who kept him company. "Land agent's place, possibly. Let's go in. Oh! so the door is locked, and they forgot to leave the key. Thoughtless of them, but——"

He secured a stone, broke the lock and entered. Pipes and tobacco lay on the rude desk, and they filled and began smoking.

"Land agent, sure enough," Blackington resumed. "Maps on the wall and books on the shelves. Now, here is Clarford's 'Rights of Eminent Domain.' Humph! Fine volume for this coast. Capital! Then here—Haggett, did I ever tell you I was a lawyer's clerk before taking to the sea?"

"Yes," replied the mate.

"I certainly was, and what I don't know about law isn't worth hinting at. Here is a copy of the laws of this fine old coast, almost fresh from the press. Ah! a name written on the fly-leaf. Am-

brose G. Salter, Notary Public, San Aloysio, California. There we get the name of this town. I reckon, and it tells us just where we are."

"South of 'Frisco."

"Yes, but not a long journey from there."

The pirate chief turned the pages with keen interest.

"Laws by the bushel," he continued, "but like old friends to me. Give me an hour with this book and I could perform the duties of a notary as well as the departed Ambrose G. Salter. Look! Legal seem not to be much different from those I learned in the State of—— well, never mind where. Here, however, is a special law on piracy. I am not well informed as to that little misdemeanor. Say, with the unspoken consent of Ambrose in the next book. It will be capital reading when we get aboard ship again."

He pocketed the volume and turned upon Haggett, his mood undergoing an abrupt change.

"We are in San Aloysio, and near to 'Frisco. We will go to that place, get a new ship and take to the sea again."

"Shall we walk right in among those fellows who have been hunting us——"

"Californians have pot hunted us, for it was only a Government warship. Of course, people on this coast have heard of us a whole lot, but that is all they know about us. I've just pointed out before, they would certainly not expect survivors of the late sea battle to come here. That is our greatest safeguard. Another thing is that there are too busy making money to give heed to us. Lastly, sailors are scarce in 'Frisco. We could all go there and ship in due form if we wanted to, but that would not suit us. We are going there to steal a ship, put to sea, and then resume our old honest trade as pirates. Jolly, isn't it, Haggett?"

The speaker seemed to find it so, and he laughed jovially, but the laugh could not hide the fact that he was all that his reputation branded him with being. He had a fairly good-looking face, but mouth and eyes gave the lie to all smiles. Every seaman knew Captain Blackington, the pirate, by reputation, and knew him to be a pitiless butcher of the seas.

"On to 'Frisco!" he added. "Then, depend upon it, we will steal a ship and get back into our old calling. Long live the freebooters!"

CHAPTER III.

VARIOUS vessels were lying alongside the trade piers when Alder Gladden paused to scan them critically. He had [illegible] no knowledge of the sea nor [illegible] than what he had gained [illegible] to California, but he had an [illegible] and could tell, in a [illegible] of the ocean tub [illegible] way, the difference between [illegible] of the real article. An [illegible] Both were abundantly represented in San Francisco at that time, and he was trying to develop a sailor's skill.

Just now he had before him several ships, but he was in a place of stillness. Many had been deserted by their crews, who had run away to the gold-diggings, and it happened that none of the others was being stowed with cargo.

Looking, he had the desire to talk with somebody, and, seeing a neatly dressed, lean-faced, gentlemanly-appearing man on the farther part of the pier, walked to his side. The man met the same inquisitive look, but stood inactive, quietly masterful.

"I judge," said Gladden, "that you are a sailor?"

"That is right," was the ready reply.

"Then tell me, if you please, how you like the build of yonder brigantine."

"Very well. She has fine looks and speed. Long, narrow hull, an excellent sheer, well-masted. Give her proper sails and she will eat up the distance capitally."

"So I thought. And that full-rigger beyond her?"

"Only for a scow. Too stumpy, and her masts are big enough to make sills for a house. Put her in the outside sea under full sail and you would see hands with the mad impetuosity of a runaway snail."

"You gratify me with your verdict, for, tho I am only a landsman, I want to get a sea eye into me. Fact is——"

Gladden paused and surveyed his companion more critically. Being a good judge of men's capabilities, if not of their moral nature, he saw that his companion was a person who would handle a situation masterfully when occupied with it. It was the kind of man he admired.

"Fact is," he resumed, "I am thinking of going to sea. I have chartered a full-rigger ship, and sail in a week or two. I am told that she has speed and stability, and that's what I want. Except that she differs from a scow she reminds me of that brigantine yonder."

"What is your ship, sir?"

"The Lively Lucy. She's lying at Jim Peterson's pier."

"I remember noticing her. She is all you claim. Good lines, built down for speed, masted as gracefully as a church spire. Give her canvas and she will walk as prettily as an arrow."

Gladden's face beamed with delight.

"Glad you approve of her, Mr. ——. I think you did not mention your name."

"Ambrose G. Salter," replied the lean-faced man absent-mindedly.

"Ah! Do you happen to be a ship captain?"

"Not at this moment. I was captain of the John D. Morton, a full-rigger hailing from Astoria, but, when we were bound for Frisco, a few days back, a beast of a scow that carried no light ran afoul of us in a moonless night and sunk my ship. Being nearer here than to Astoria, my mate, Haggett, and I led our sailors to this port."

This fluent statement lacked nothing but truth to make it well told.

"I dare say your sailors have all skipped to the gold fields?"

"Not one of them. The diggings are all right, but my men voted to stick by me."

"And are you all disengaged?"

"All of us. Not a man has signed the articles with any ship."

"Ah-h-h!"

Gladden breathed the exclamation with long-drawn force, while the lean-faced man eyed him sharply. If the merchant was interested, Captain Salter seemed to be in the same way. Nevertheless, the mariner did not hasten matters, but prudently waited.

"Can you recommend your hands fully?" Gladden pursued, after a pause.

"Absolutely so. Not a man of them is a sea-goers, skilful as any man afloat and—ahem!—as honest fellows as ever lived. That's why I've been so anxious to keep them with me. Besides, sailors are very scarce in 'Frisco just now."

"Mighty scarce. Soon as a ship makes

"She's lying at Jim Peterson's pier."

this port her crew skips for the gold-diggings. Your hands are all deep-sea men, eh?"

"Every man, sir."

Again the merchant meditated, after which he spoke explosively.

"See here, Captain, I'd like to know what you think of a project I have in mind. It relates to the whaling industry, and the project is a radical improvement of the whole method, with inland bases——"

Being thus begun, Mr. Gladden described his idea, as he had described it to Doctor Hillson on a former occasion. He had an attentive listener in Captain Ambrose G. Salter, and received no discouraging comments. On the contrary, when he had finished the tale of his idea and seemingly meditated long and seriously, he gave only encouragement.

"Your plan," said Salter, "is entirely new, I think, but it seems to me to be very promising. If successful it will revolutionize the business and bring big money. Naturally, the first step would be to send out a ship to select certain islands for the bases. Being quite familiar with the Pacific, I can suggest various islands, but, of course, you should see them for yourself before deciding. Now, if you fit out a ship as you suggest, you can sail that way and have your look."

"Excellent!"

"Besides myself and mate I have eight sailors. That will be enough."

"I am told that the Lively Lucy requires ten men before the mast, with a captain and two mates. It oddly happens that I already have a mate, one Noel Wilkinson, and two hands engaged. Add them to your force and we have exactly what is needed in numbers."

"Yes."

Salter spoke slowly, and almost as if he did not approve of the additions to his own crew.

"Young Wilkinson, by the way," Mr. Gladden pursued, "is not a deep-sea man, but he is to marry my daughter Eveline some day, and as he is an expert coaster I am glad to have him along."

"Most certainly!" exclaimed Salter, with sudden heartiness. "You do well to take him. We shall be a smart crew."

"When will you and your hands sign the articles?"

"Right away, sir."

"We will set that formality for this afternoon. You can meet me, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"Then we will get the names on paper, after which we'll take up other details in order. There is a notary's office in that big building yonder—do you see it?"

"Yes."

"Meet me there at three o'clock. How is that?"

"Good!"

Captain Salter did not speak with his former heartiness, and he looked at the walls of the building as if there was something disquieting in the idea of going there.

"I believe that is all for now," said Mr. Gladden, with a deep breath of relief. "With sailors so scarce, I'm glad as a sailor's boarding-house. Entering, he made his way to a room on the second floor, and was with a sour-looking man who was paying homage to a black pipe and sending up a cloud of smoke. He scowled at the newcomer.

"How in thunder," he asked, irritably, "can you be so jovial when we are in such a miserable fix?"

"Cheer up, Haggett, man!" Salter returned gayly. "We are in no fix. We are about to ship in the full-rigger lively Lucy and sail for the Pacific. All settled."

"What's the use of lying?"

"What's the use of hoping? Haggett, I've struck it rich. There is an old codger here in Frisco who wants to send a ship to reconnoiter as a preliminary to revolutionizing the whaling business——"

He continued and explained the project in full.

"Humph!" growled Haggett. "A crazy scheme, since the only way that the Pacific is a vast sea covering thousands of miles? And he would pick out a few little islands to try out sperm oil? Why, the man is deranged."

"No!" Salter replied promptly. "His mind is all right, and he is a good business man in his line, I feel sure, but he has no conception of sea matters, distances and navigation. The idea is an impossibility, but that need not worry us. Fact is, he has engaged you and me, and all our lads, for his crew in the full-rigger he has chartered."

"No!"

"Yes. We all meet him at three o'clock and sign the articles."

"In a so-called honest ship?"

"Yes."

"And will you go knocking around in his tub like a lamb in pasture? You have lost your wits, Blackington."

"Not one of them. We will sail our good merchant to the waters we like best, and then knock him and his friends in the head and toss them to the fishes. Then we shall once more have a ship for our own, and we can again take up the learned profession of expert piracy!"

"Is everything as rosy as that?" demanded Haggett, his moroseness dispelled by sudden delight.

"Just that rosy. Wait a bit! There is one danger-spot on our sun. While I was talking with our merchant I was thinking deeply, and tho it was impressed on my mind that I must not admit that I was Blackington, I made a stupid blunder when giving my interviewer a name. I told him I was Captain Ambrose G. Salter."

"You gave the name of that notary back in San Aloydo?" snarled Haggett.

"Yes, and it was a bad break, for we are soon to go before a 'Frisco notary to sign articles for our coming voyage. Trouble may come of it, but men in California are mostly new arrivals, and it's hardly likely the notary here ever heard of Salter of San Aloydo. Anyhow, we've got to risk it and trust to luck. The [illegible] has been fairly fine at us, and [illegible] goes well [illegible] the crew will soon be afloat in a new ship of our own. Gladden and his friends will, well, down below!"

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. It costs you only $1.00, and you will not regret it.

* * *

A PRAYER.

Dear Lord, when bruised and weary
'neath the weight,
And I, in shadows grope, nor understand
With heart uncomforted and desolate,
Hold Thou my hand.

And tho I needs must walk o'er toilsome way,
Where tired feet falter, quivering lips protest,
Help me, dear Lord, in humbleness to say,
"Thou knowest best."

Facing Gethsemane, and Calvary's
"Lama sabacthani," Thou, too, didst
moan,
Help me to say, with, cup drained to the
lees,
"Thy will be done."

* * *

Needed Them.

A large manufacturing concern sent frequent and urgent demands to a certain debtor, and, after being unable to get so much as a response, sent a representative to personally wait upon him.

"Why haven't you paid your account, or at least written us concerning the matter?" the representative asked.

"My dear sir," responded the delinquent, smilingly, "those collection letters from your firm are the best I have ever seen. I have had copies made and am sending them out to the trade, and it's wonderful the number of old accounts I have been able to collect. I haven't paid my bill, as I felt sure there was another letter in the series. I have some hard customers to deal with and I need the last letter."

SLANT-EYED FOES

-:- Or, -:-

Yellow Peril Coils

By Augustin W. Breeden

(Copyright 1917 by W. D. Boyce Co.)

Begun in No. 9, March 3. Subscriptions can begin with this issue or back copies, can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER IV.

A MEETING IN MID-AIR.

PATRICIA FOLSOM remained locked in her room for two days following the night of Kitzi's horsewhipping. She refused to see a soul, even Ynez Herara, and took no food. Her mother became greatly worried about her, and so did her father and brother; but they knew the Folsom determination, and that it was best to let her have her pout out thoroly before they tried to reason with her.

And during those two days Colonel Dick was too much taken up with Ynez to have much time to think of his sister. He and Ynez were almost constantly together, sometimes in Colonel Dick's big racing car, sometimes on the river in a motor boat, sometimes on the trails across the broad acres of the ranch. Colonel Dick was miserable when out of her sight, and before two days were up he had proposed to her and had been accepted.

Then, when they were engaged, she had asked him to go to Guana Junto and open up the Vets Madre mine for her, and he had readily consented to undertake the commission. Thus the fly was caught by the spider, the lion was caught in the toils and had fallen at the lovely one's feet. Ynez Herara never guessed what a dangerous lion she was playing with, or that death probably lay in some careless able and less dangerous for her tool.

It was on the third day of Patricia's self-imprisonment that Kitzi Hawk reached his decision to go to Guana Junto. Leaving his biplane behind, he motored car to the city, where he began to wind up his work there. And that afternoon Patricia stole out of her room and walked and looked the machine over thoroly.

She had once made a flight in it, and she once longed for more, for the wild exhilarating sensation that she had then enjoyed. Imprisoned, shut in, as she felt herself to be, she longed for some supreme sensation of power and freedom, and a Curtiss biplane promised this. She had thought out that little battle scene the night that Kitzi had received his whipping; and always, when she began to doubt the Jap, she had only to look on the wonderful gold dragon from her bosom and looked at it. He had said that it would protect her from all harm, and she had a superstitious feeling

[illegible]

[illegible] on the second night at midnight, these had come a gentle rap at her window, and a note pushed under the thrust in a letter from Kitzi. The letter was full of love for her and magnificent castles toward her future life. It hinted that its author might make a little aeroplane flight the following Monday, but said nothing definite.

So Patricia looked over her brother's machine, tightened a nut here and a screw there, and looked forward to a flight on Monday. Having got everything shipshape that afternoon, she ran the plane out of the hangar for a short flight, a mere try-out of the engine. The engine worked beautifully, and she rose up above the cheerful green of the wide ranches and villages, feeling the exultation of power and freedom and control.

After every afternoon's flight, when it was not too windy, she went up for still another flight. The exercise restored her good humor, and every mention of the affair of the whipping she met her parents cordially enough, and was on good terms with the stalwart law-to-be. Meanwhile Colonel Dick was detained at the dam.

Then came Monday, the day for the big flight. She worked hard all the morning with wrenches, pliers, screwdriver and wiping tow, and always she studied the barometer, a little device which she wore on her wrist like a military watch. At exactly twelve o'clock she was off.

She rose from the race course like a duck leaving the surface of a lake, a most beautiful sight to see; and her father, watching admiringly, said:

"There goes the most daring of good women. Some day she'll overdo that really big, either to her everlasting shame or her everlasting glory."

The mother, watching nervously, thought:

"What is this world coming to? My mother rode in a closed coach with attendants; I, who was afraid of a bicycle at 20, find myself driving a touring car at 55, and now my daughter has discarded a racing car for an aeroplane. What will the next generation bring?"

As Patricia saw the earth turn liquid beneath her she thought:

"Now, this is power! This is control! This is life!"

She had an exhilarating sense of supremacy as she rose higher and her horizons widened and widened. Her mind was toward the visions of what that checkered landscape would have presented sixty or seventy years before, and forward to what it would present sixty or seventy years hence.

"What are boundaries and nations?" she cried above the loud staccato of her exhaust and the drone of the propeller-blade. "What is race and caste and all that when one has once risen to this and seen a real vision of the world below? The next generation will shake off all narrowness and prejudices because of the aeroplane and other means of rapid travel. Then my people will be proud that the daughter of the house became the wife of a foreign Emperor."

She gazed to the west toward San Francisco, and there, a mere speck in the chaste blue, she saw another biplane.

"Kitzi," she murmured. "He is coming to woo me as the wooer his queen —in mid-air. Well, I will circle upward and let him follow as he can. We shall see which is the more daring aeronaut."

She was now high in the mid-blue. The fair domain of California was a mere dull mahogany-colored blur to her. An aeroscross-current of air, coming off the snow-covered Sierras, caught her machine, and she had to keep a firm hand on it, as on a human antagonist. One navigating a Curtiss biplane in a wind has to use both hands, both feet, both shoulders, and all the brain and nerve fibers one possesses, in a complex of delicate and highly controlled muscles. It is a battle to a finish against blind forces. It is intoxicating. Patricia felt that she had never before been so much alive in the moment, with every sense absolutely on the alert, and her very life dependent at times almost upon motions of hairbreadth nicety.

And meanwhile Kitzi in his machine coming nearer and nearer into her field of air. The sky-wind was beating in her face. She would have to shield but for her goggles. Her limbs ached with the cold and exertion. She felt her spirit dissipating her body and ready to leave it as merely a part of the complex mechanism she was handling. She herself was pure spirit, and the spirit that rode in turn controlled levers and pulleys and planes and propeller. She represented man's triumph over gravity.

Thus, fighting and triumphing finally [illegible]

was tormenting her, and could set herself in a sweet calm above the alfalfa fields and quiet streams and orchards. And there, coming up to her, was Kitzi. With perfect control she volplaned downward to meet her. She twice circled lazily against the blue with engines cut out, a pair of great mechanical birds, sailing or resting, rings above the habitations of mundane man.

"Hello, Queen of the air!" Kitzi called to her, using the tube.

"Hello, King of the blue!" she called back to him.

"Suppose we land in yonder meadow and have a stroll in the wood?"

"It pleases me well," answered the girl, playfully, "for I am tired of the lanes of the air and fain would be where mortals dwell!"

And so the two landed in a wide meadow and strolled into a mossy, fernyy woodland, happy in each other's presence as only two lovers can be.

But a great deal of trouble in mid-air is rather a dangerous thing to do in cases where privacy is important. Two people would meet and fight with exceptional interest. One was Tom Ashley, neighboring ranchman of the Folsoms, who for years had been unreasonably in love with Patricia, and a rival was Colonel Dick, who was returning in his big racing car from the dam, when he first saw thru his glasses Kitzi come down up and develop into a biplane against the blue and another aeroplane rise up from the distance as if to join it.

Tom Ashley never guessed who the second aeroplane could have for an occupant, and the sight of the two filled him stunned to carry his loved Patricia merely served to awaken a train of philosophy in his mind. So he mused:

"That girl is just like a thorobred. The more spirited and pure-blooded one is, the harder to break. Gentleness, gentleness and patience are required. That girl is high-spirited, that's all. She can't do wrong and be a thoro lady. Some day she'll come home, older and wiser and more ready to appreciate those that love her. Then I'll show her what true love is."

But Colonel Dick began to see red as soon as his field glass told him who the pursuing aeronaut was. He threw his big racer into her best pace and bore down upon the two where they were hobnobbing their tete-a-tete in the air above the meadow. Had they not been so busy with their machines and each other, they might have seen a huge cloud which he was to blind in more ways than one; and so with his exhaust muffled he overtook them while they strolled unconscious of approaching annoyance in the wood.

Patricia observed her brother just as he was getting out of his car in a little rustic lane not far from their grove, and with a cry she gave the alarm.

"Run, Kitzi!" she screamed. "Run for your machine!"

Kitzi ran. And Colonel Dick, being as fleet of foot as an Indian, cut across the meadow and intercepted him on the way where the two biplanes were parked. Kitzi had the start, however, and was in his machine and climbing upward by the time Colonel Dick and his sister reached the other plane. The Colonel was a fine Patrician, and he leaped into the seat and started the machine so quickly that she was almost carried off her feet in a storm of dust swept up by the whirling propeller.

The Colonel steered his machine directly behind Kitzi's and put on all the gasoline he could carry. He was also seeing red. Something in this being above the earth gave him a feeling that he had never longed for before, and the laws of man. He was like a captain on a vessel long at sea; he felt himself in a new world. Kitzi was a pirate, and all the speed he could command, and he had quite a bit the start. Nevertheless, Colonel Dick was gaining slowly. It was a low, straightaway flight, with San Francisco for the goal.

The Colonel began to bring the Jap to earth as he would bring down a flying duck. He steadied the planes with his shoulder and kept his eyes on the rear. His exhaust was deafening in his ears. He could not gauge the distance very accurately, but he judged himself to be almost within pistol shot. He reached in his pocket for his big automatic.

"This is manslaughter and five years in stripes," he mused to himself, "for I guess I'm wrong, after all, and half the county is watching us. Why doesn't he do something? He knows it is self-defense. He won't shoot. I'll just chase him over the horizon to show Patsy what a coward he is. Hello!"

[illegible] suddenly goes dead, completely dead. He was smitten with the thought that it would never to get even with the dying Kitzi. He raised his weapon, took aim and fired. The flying aeroplane immediately listed to an angle of thirty degrees, then took surprisingly quick half-circle back on its course, and collided with Colonel Dick's machine in mid-air.

The two machines fell with a crash and a cloud of dust around Colonel Dick had all the wind knocked out of him and got a horrible bump on the head. Otherwise he escaped, and crawled out from under the wreckage to the astonishment of a half-dozen ranch hands who came running to the spot. Fortunately, neither his machine caught fire. Colonel Dick looked for the Jap. He was lying, tangled in the wreckage of his own machine, bleeding freely, and apparently dead or dying.

CHAPTER V.

IN A RACING CAR.

COLONEL DICK'S first act was to rescue Kitzi from the tangle of broken stays and planes, and do what he could to resuscitate him and bind up his wounds. His own head was throbbing fit to burst, and he ached in every bone and muscle of his body. From time to time he grew sick and dizzy. He wondered if he were not suffering from an internal injury. While he and the men who had gathered were doing what they could for the unconscious Kitzi, Patricia came up in her racing car.

"Put her in here," she commanded. "We can take him to a doctor's quicker than we could bring a doctor here."

This racing car was designed to carry only two persons, and the sister and brother got into it, and the tall and powerful Patricia held Kitzi in her lap like a child, while her brother took over the wheel and made all possible speed. She was an excellent surgeon living at the village six miles below Greenfields, and to him Patricia directed her brother to drive. Not a word was spoken as mile after mile was eaten up, the doctor was waiting for them when they arrived; it seemed that he in company with every one else knew of the affair. He helped carry Kitzi into his office and made a hasty examination. Then he shook his head sadly.

"Looks pretty bad," he muttered. "Colonel, I was watching this thing thru my field glasses. If I were you I'd get out of the country for a short time. Give it a chance to sort of blow over, don't you see?"

"Yes, that's best," said Patricia. Seemingly all anger at her brother had fled at the first thought of his danger. "You may take the car and go now. I'll stay here and help the doctor for a little while."

Colonel Dick found the entire household gathered on the front lawn when he reached Greenfields, and Tom Ashley was there also. Tom, at the first, to make inquiries.

"I don't know a thing about his chances of recovery," replied Colonel Dick, in reply to his inquiries. "I failed to find a bullet wound, and so did Dr. Carey; and it's my opinion that he was hurt principally when his car was wrecked. But of course I'm in for it, if he dies. I'm off for Guana Junto, at once. Wish you'd go down to the village and bring Patricia home. She's got no business hanging around that Jap."

Ynez came out to Colonel Dick, and he sketched his plans to her rapidly.

"I am ready to go to Mexico for you to open up your Vets Madre mine. I will leave here in my racing car for Tecolote, and from Tecolote I'll wire you."

"Then I will go with you."

"Very well, but please leave me alone with my girl today. I wish you'd go down to the village and bring Patricia home. She's got no business hanging around that Jap."

Ynez came out to Colonel Dick, and he sketched his plans to her rapidly.

"I am ready to go to Mexico for you to open up your Vets Madre mine. I will leave here in my racing car for Tecolote, and from Tecolote I'll wire you."

"Then I will go with you."

"Very well, but please leave me alone with my girl today. I will wire you what I will be doing."

And while Ynez was inside the house packing her silk suitcases hastily, the big, manly Colonel Dick was weeping real tears into the graying hair of his little sister, while she rested her head on his shoulder and sobbed.

"But Ynez," protested Colonel Dick, when the girl finally came down to him dressed for a long auto trip, "is it quite proper for you to go with me? It will be days and days of motoring before I reach my ultimate destination."

"I will go as far as Tecolote," insisted the girl, "and from there I can take the Southern Pacific to Juarez; then I can join you later at Guana Junto."

But by now Colonel Dick's black head also bidden his anxious father good-by, had sent Tom Ashley on his way after Patricia, for it was the car he was speeding south, with the woman he loved at his side. They took the main road up the San Joaquin Valley. Darkness came on and with it the chill of night. The summer stars came out and gleamed in the dark sky, like diamonds against a background of black velvet. Dick wrapped a heavy [illegible] around Ynez, and drew her closer to him as the car sped [illegible] Dick felt that [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

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wrote a check that covered it, and it was mailed. Colonel Dick was not long in Mexico before he began to learn that Ynez was a power. It was not only that she could write checks that ran into tens of thousands. She bade the Colonel ship his car back into the States as no longer of any use to him, and she secured him an excellent house and an escort and bodyguard of three well-mounted Mexicans. Not only that, but her name was a passport to secure him freedom of action in anything he undertook.

Having told her good-by on the steps of a Sunset Limited train, Colonel Dick turned the days over for all on the civilization he knew and loved, and rode into the interior of Mexico toward he knew not what adventure. On the third day of his ride across the desert he came upon a great military camp; and there he was introduced to Pancho Villa and to one Rafael Herara, Ynez's brother. The three men held a long conference. Colonel Dick modestly announced to young Herara his engagement to his sister, and explained to the two men that he had been employed by his finance to open the Veta Madre and shortly set them his plans for doing so. They listened to him with a show of interest. He found them both very intelligent and quick.

"I will go to Guana Juato with you, Colonel Folsom," Rafael Herara announced. Senor Herara. "I can be of assistance to you in more ways than one."

Thus on the following day the rough journey overland till they reached the railroad at Casas Grandes, Colonel Dick had the pleasure of the company of his traveling companion. He found the young Mexican a very likable sort of a person, rather more of a man-about than a man of action. But young Herara was never tired of singing the ancient glories of the far-famed Veta Madre or of the far-famed Ciudad Guana Juato. A private car belonging to the Heraras was switched onto a southbound train at Casas Grandes, and the wealth and power of the Heraras became more and more apparent as they approached their ancestral home in the rich inland State of Guana Juato.

On a brilliant midsummer day at midday they arrived at the rich, dusty little city of Guana Juato. Such another sight Colonel Dick never beheld. A motley crowd greeted the travelers, the rich and blind, the old and the young, somberly and gayly clad—a most bizarre mixture of humanity. Soldiers stepped forward in the extreme: Licensed cargadores, the ancient Mexican makeshift for the modern red-cap, hotel runners, all eager to carry anything for young Senor Herara that he should require. They bowed and salaamed before him as if he were a prince of the blood royal. Lordly rancheros in silver-laced trousers, serapas and clanking gold spurs stepped for- [illegible] low, holding their great silver-bangled [illegible] hearts in courtly fashion, then straightened up and embraced young Herara as if he were their own brother in blood. Demure damasels, whose olive-skinned complexions, immoderately plastered over with white chalk, made their black snappy eyes and raven hair seem darker by contrast, stood about in bashful, awkward groups, and courtsied low if Rafael Herara as much as glanced in their direction.

Leaving the almost fortified railroad yards, Colonel Dick and his escort passed the mail, scene of many a Sunday fiesta, and entered the narrow, cobbled streets of the city lying huddled together in a crisscross of steep valleys, with every hill and spur surmounted by a cross-crowned church.

"There is a church for every rich mine, and there are many rich mines here," explained Herara, noting the puzzled, awed look of wonder and admiration. "You see, in the old days, each Spanish mine owner was required to build a church of gold and silver as the direct work of his patron saint, and so if his mine was prosperous he built a church to the glory of this patron saint, and now the churches stand as a symbol of past prosperity to which present prosperity evil days came and the mines were flooded."

"And which one stands for the Veta Madre?" asked the wondering Colonel Dick.

"You see the tall double-spired church on the high hill yonder?"

"Yes."

"That is the Church of San Felipe, and was built by my ancestors in celebration of the greatness and richness of the Veta Madre. The house just to the right of it is the Herara home."

Colonel Dick's head was swept off his feet. Never in any of his travels had he seen a more beautiful church or a grander and more imposing mansion. He realized now for the first time what really important people these Heraras were.

CHAPTER VI.
THE COUP.

SHALL I tell how Colonel Dick Folsom, efficient engineer and manager of men that he was, organized a band of Mexican and Japanese laborers and prepared to reopen the ancient Veta Madre? How he and Rafael Herara went north with fifty picked men and five thousand rounds of ammunition to escort the five carloads of pumping machinery to Guano Juato? How Colonel Dick toiled to the breaking point by day, and spent his nights in heavenly tete-a-tetes with the divine Ynez, who had deigned to come on to her home after an indefinite stay in Chicago?

That castle on the hill opposite the church of Santa Ynez was a ceaseless wonder to Colonel Dick. Never in all his life had he seen such rugs, such tapestries, such ancient and valuable trinkets. There hung Cellini's Cup of Apple-white with the family crest of the house of Herara y Manrique carved on the back of each of the chalice tongue. There were vases dating back to the twelfth century, there was statuary dating back to the third century B. C. The wonderment of this strange, rich wonderland was Ynez Herara y Manrique, whom the Colonel confidently expected some day to make his wife.

It was the week that the pumping machinery was installed when the water which had stood hundreds of feet deep in the mine for a century and a half was gradually being reduced under the throb and pulse of the gigantic pumps, that Colonel Dick got a shocking surprise. One midnight he strolled and sighed under the window of his sweetheart's boudoir, and strolling and sighing thus inside the grounds of the ancient Herara estate, he suddenly was aware that he heard the voice of the woman he loved close by him in the shrubbery. Colonel Dick was no eavesdropper by nature, but the voice sounded so sweet to him that he loved to him made him listen.

The woman was Ynez, and this booh who thinks I am going to marry him is going to find his mine for me. It will make the family richer by millionaires many times over, and will aid in our cause, the Catahama."

"Prince Catahama!" Colonel Dick had heard that name before. He knew of the Prince as one of the most dangerous international plotters ever set foot upon American soil. He listened breathlessly.

"The gold and silver from this, the richest mine in the world, will insure the success of our arms against the Gringoes, and when Japan has opened up this mine for me, then I can throw him over for one of nobler birth and better antecedents."

Colonel Dick went hot and cold by turns. He did not suppose that in all the world there could be found a woman so heartless and scheming as was this creature. His mind was made up in a moment, as he saw that Ynez was no one, man or woman, should use him for a tool and cat's-paw. Then he listened to learn how the Japanese schemer could have to do with the affair.

"And when we have established our pact from Lima to the Santa Ana River," intoned the smooth Jap, "and when we have driven every Gringo out of that pale, then our power is good, and we shall rule absolutely in Mexico, and then let us hope Japanese influence shall hold [illegible] Rio Grande to Cape Horn."

It will be the first great Japanese imperialism, the first move toward making Nippon the master of the Pacific."

"Oh, ho!" thought Colonel Dick. "So that was their scheme! The Mexicans would then be under the United States, with the Japanese for their allies, and under some disgraceful treaties we sign a large belt of country to the Japs."

He tiptoed out of the grounds and fled down the hillside to the street toward his own lodgings. He began at once to perfect his plans. But the next morning at the mine he could tell that something was wrong. The work went on as usual. The great pumps delivered a perfect [illegible] from the end of the chute; the water level in the mine sank steadily lower and lower; his Japanese and Mexican laborers were with their various activities. Yet in his little room, hidden behind closed shutters and locked doors, the enemy was preparing a huge can of nitroglycerin and a powerful detonator. Colonel Dick was familiar with explosives. He knew what a tremendous charge it would take to do the work he had planned. He had picked nearly one of each night in his little chemical laboratory, for chemicals were scarce and he had to use many makeshifts.

Meanwhile he bought from a ruined caballero a fine black horse, reputed to be the swiftest in all the state of Guana Juato, and kept him in a tiny lot not far from his lodgings. He also tried in every way possible to learn more of the Carsanistas of the scheme that Herara and his Villista allies had on foot, for he felt sure that the honorable Rafael Herara, was of course at the bottom of this nefarious scheme and expected thereby to make himself dictator of Mexico. But in this last he failed utterly. The inhabitants of Guana Juato seemed to the man to be sorely loyal to the Herara name and to the Villista cause. Nowhere could he find a trusted messenger to carry his word out of the city.

To destroy the pumps that were to keep the mine clear of water probably then meant death for him, possibly death with torture; but he meant to go thru with it. It was his patriotic duty to his own beloved United States. And Colonel Dick was determined upon one thing—he would make the perfidious Ynez actually touch off the charge of nitroglycerin that should destroy the pumps. She had planned a big celebration, which

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was to begin with a blaze of fireworks in the city plaza, for the night that the mine became dry enough so that workers would be able to descend into it.

"Let us make merry here at your house that night," Colonel Dick begged. "We will need to appear only for a moment before the crowd, and that we may do late. So I will buy a wire from here to the plaza, and arrange it so that your merely touching a button will set off the fireworks at the appointed hour. Then you and I can sit here and hold one glorious tete-a-tete while the mob in the plaza cheers itself hoarse."

"You are so thoughtful," murmured Ynez. "You are a perfect Romeo—an ideal lover."

It had been a week since Colonel Dick had overheard the plot in the shrubbery, and Cutahama had long since disappeared. Rafael Herara was likewise gone, had been gone for weeks into northern Mexico, where he was no doubt conspiring with Pancho Villa for all sorts of devilment against the United States. The commanding spirit in Guana Juato was none other than Ynez.

Then came the night for the grand celebration, a celebration that taxed the ingenuity of Colonel Dick to the utmost, to supply the proper pyrotechnic display. But luckily he found an old supply of fireworks in an obscure shop, and as for wine and pulque and mescal, he had purchased these drinkables in unlimited quantities; he meant to see that the drink-loving city got thoroly drunk for once.

At sunset a temporary stage in the middle of the plaza was all set for the ceremonies. The plaza, and indeed the entire city, was decorated with the tricolor of Mexico. The cry: "Viva los Villistas! Viva Herara!" could be heard in every direction. Arrangements had been made for a number of young men and old of oratorical tendencies to occupy the platform one after another till a late hour; and an excellent band would discourse sweet music between the inflamed, impassioned speeches. Oh, this was to be a night of nights in old Guana Juato: for the Vets Madre, richest mine in the world, and now about dry for nearly two centuries, had suddenly come to life and promised to flood the city once more with golden wealth. At eight o'clock precisely, Colonel Dick and his bride-to-be, the worshipped Ynez Herara y Manrique, were to appear hand in hand upon the platform, and the Colonel, the Yankee hero of a Gringo-hating people, was to make a short speech.

At eight o'clock, Colonel Dick appeared in the centuries-old Herara salon, and was greeted with a stately kiss by the queenly Ynez.

"The crowd is clamoring for the initial display of fireworks," said the Colonel. "Are you not ready, Ynez, darling." If so, touch the button and open up a new reign for Guana Juato."

He took the girl for a moment in his arms as he spoke. Then he led her gently to the side of the room where the electric button was located.

"Look out the window toward the plaza as you touch it, dear," he said.

He bowed his head and listened as she pressed the plunger. There was a roar of tremendous explosions, and for a moment the grounds outside the window were made brilliant by the pyrotechnic display. Then there arose a great cheer from the half-drunken mob on the plaza.

"It is done!" muttered Colonel Dick to himself. "The crowd at the mine were all drunk and off duty. The explosion there was doubtless heard in the general salvo of explosions."

He wheeled and caught the girl by the hand as if in ecstasy of enthusiasm.

"Come, Ynez, let us go to the garden and make merry there, on this most wonderful of nights!"

The girl obeyed him, and together they ran out into the palace grounds. There stood the great black horse, Demon, the fastest in the State of Guana Juato. With a swift motion, Colonel Dick caught the girl, swung her up before him, and mounted. Then he put spurs to the horse, and dashed north toward the northern exit of the ciudad.

"What does this mean?" cried the girl in some alarm and annoyance.

"Only that you are going with me for a wild ride tonight," replied the Colonel. "Never fear. We will ride under the deep shade of the trees, and appointed we shall be back in the plaza saluting the worshiping crowd. Have I not done enough for you, Ynez, that you not trust yourself alone with me under the stars this night?"

The woman answered with a Cleopatra-like smile clung close to the man who held her in his arms. Across the desert they raced, and between the high encircling hills. Twice they were challenged by sentries, but both times the voice and manner of Colonel Dick was a charm to let them pass. Mile after mile they rode, the hoofbeats of the horse making a strange, rapid, ratchan under the stars. "To death or glory! To death or glory!" was the burden that they beat out in the heart of Colonel Dick.

He did not care much now if it turned out to be death, he had been smitten to the heart by the soulful beauty of the woman he had loved and had expected to marry. He had accomplished his revenge, and had caused her to learn how delicate hand to touch off the charge that destroyed the possibilities of Vets Madre. In forty-eight hours the mine would once more be hopelessly flooded with water. And now he had her here with him in the desert. She could not organize a band and start after him, and he believed the others in Guana Juato would be helpless without her leadership.

But what to do with her? That was the question that kept tormenting him. What he wished to do was to carry her with him to the Carranzista lines and turn her over to them as a Federal prisoner. He therefore headed old Demon westward toward a stronghold of the Carranzista forces.

"Here! Where are you taking me?" she demanded, with her suspicions suddenly aroused. "You told me to us to turn back if we are to appear on the platform at eleven o'clock."

He laughed at her and told her that the mob would be too drunk before eleven to know whether they appeared or not, and what was the difference? The mine was drained dry. The workmen could go in on the morrow. That was the big outstanding fact. Tonight he would ride with her wholly his, and ride with him whither he listed? Thus for the second time he quieted her fears, and still they rode across the wide Mexican mesas.

Then for the third time her suspicions became aroused, and she half deplored her false politically, but that he had become so infatuated with her beauty that he had ceased to carry her off in some fantastness and keep her there in durance; for until recently he had again and again threatened to become her wife. Now he humored this suspicion, and when she commanded him to turn back, gave a wild, thrilling laugh and refused to obey her.

"You have tantalized me too long!" he cried. "Now I have you. Listen, dearie. I know of a place, a perfect paradise, that I have prepared for you. Ride with me there. You shall be queen with me there. I give you no choice in the matter. You have refused again and again to name the day. I have a priest ready. We will be married at dawn. Have I not done my work at the mine? Have I not earned my reward?"

And she, longing for an adventure with this man whom she already more than half loved in spite of her heartlessness, rode on with him under the stars.

Into what was she riding? She could not guess. It was thrilling, this being carried off bodily into a mountain fastness by a man who loved her to madness. Well, she would ride with him: she would adventure into his arms, and he cursed himself under his breath because of the fascination he had allowed such a perfidious one to have over him.

"Why, after all, should I not go ahead and marry the girl, and have done with her?" he thought. "As the husband of Ynez Herara, I might still keep the confidence of the Herara party, and be in better to defeat their cause. I might make the destruction of the mines look [illegible]

[illegible] had so planned the dynamiting from the start that of course he could not know how successful the plans had worked out.

"At dawn I will have your mine forever," he murmured in her ear.

They were suddenly challenged. The girl recognized a pert dictum.

"His work is done," she reasoned. "He has taught Pedro how to work the pumps. He does not suspect. I will—"

Aloud she said: "A. L. por A. L.," a strange password that Colonel Dick had heard Rafael Herara once, with most sinister effect, upon a spy who had been dogging them both.

Now six men leaped out of the darkness straight at Colonel Dick. He had time in the brief moment that he was drawing his pistol to note that three of the six were Jesus Pedro.

Then, keeping the screaming, struggling Ynez as much as possible between himself and his enemies, he rapidly and with deadly aim at his assailants.

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this interesting story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the best features of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly. You are not doing so. You will not regret it.

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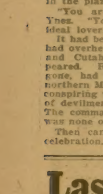

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She had on [illegible] more on

Red Wolf's Daughter

Or, The Bush Exile

By William H. Manning

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Begun in No. 5, February 3. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XVI.

A MYSTERY EXPLAINED.

MACNEILL had experienced a most uncomfortable interval, believing that he or Enee Barbeau was the target at which Gadbois was aiming, but unable to stir lest certain disaster follow.

The report of the pistol brought no calamity, however, for a wolf scurried away hastily.

"Well, well," grumbled the marksman, "it wasn't any great game, after all, but I knew something was there."

"You would fire at the moon, if you saw it," snapped Thackley Haugh. "Next time, make sure before you shoot, or I'll break your dull head."

The White Whelp was toiling up the ascent, but as his progress was away from the hidden watchers they were satisfied to wait for his departure. MacNeill was about to move nearer to Enee when he was surprised by a touch on his shoulder. Startled, he lifted his pistol and looked around with practically one motion. What he saw astonished him.

A female figure was there, and the darkness was not great enough to prevent immediate recognition on his part. Julie Dalgnault was there.

He was given no time for preliminary words, for she addressed him in a hurried, broken whisper.

"Mr. MacNeill, have you pity for the unfortunate?"

"I have," he returned promptly, "and especially for a hunted woman."

"I was sure of it, for I know how you befriended my poor father. Sir, listen to me! Every moment is precious, and I must speak rapidly, and very briefly. I am hunted by Thackley Haugh and his master, but I have a hiding-place I think they will not find. I dare not leave it for long, but I am nearly wild with the fear that they may find me. If they do, it will be the end for me. Sir, you helped my father, will you help his daughter?"

"I will, and faithfully," he replied earnestly.

"I believe you, and am about to trust everything to you. Listen! I have a packet of papers I want delivered to Ellan Gilchrist of Fort Lanarak. Will you take the packet now, and give it to Mr. Gilchrist as soon as possible, telling him it is from Dalgnault's daughter?"

"I'll take it, and nothing but death shall prevent its delivery."

"Tell him that I beseech him to aid my father."

"I will do it gladly."

"I knew I could trust you, for I marked you as a good man when we were both at Outland House. Heaven bless you, sir! Implore Gilchrist to help Michel Dalgnault! Here is the packet. It will be safe with you, but if they find me it will be lost. Take it, for I must go. Cling to that packet as if for life. I can say no more. Good-by!"

She slipped away into the darkness, but a parcel had been thrust into his hand. He wanted to detain her, to ask where she was in hiding and plan to give assistance, but her prayerful intensity checked his inclinations, and he felt obliged to obey her wishes. Placing the packet in his pocket carefully, he turned and saw Enee Barbeau by his side.

"Your conference was brief—what are they?" the bushranger asked quietly.

Words failed the Scot for a moment, for the situation had changed so greatly in a few minutes that he was bewildered. Then he laughed lightly.

"Back to camp, brother! All I wanted to do is done, and Ellan Gilchrist is near."

Enee made a gesture of surprise and stood scanning in silence.

"Listen, true-heart," added the bush exile, laying a hand on his comrade's shoulder. "I have the papers we wanted to get, and Julie has decided not to leave her alone for now. I will tell you all later, but it is her prayer that we do as she asks."

"Parbieu!" muttered Enee. "I am amazed, but—we go! Brother, come!"

He set his face away from the flittering torches and the probable cave and led swiftly toward the camp. When out of the danger zone MacNeill explained fully, and Enee nodded his content.

"Maid Julie knows what she talks about, my mate! Here's her for now. She must have seen you from the cave, and I suspect her father is with her. Some day we will rescue them from this region. You have the papers—vraiment, they came strangely!"

Camp was reached without mischance. Gilchrist and Veitch and their dusky terrs were under the shelter, but when Masson met the returning pair in the outer circle he opened to make a remark that turned MacNeill's thoughts into a new channel. He touched the coat where the secret cipher was hidden, and, reminded of the White Whelp, resolved to make one more effort to get light. The cipher he understood Haugh fully, the better. Being sure no listener was near he began his efforts.

"Masson," he asked, "what do you know about the Dread Dozen?"

"About what?" echoed the clerk, blankly.

"The Dread Dozen."

"Never heard of such a thing."

"But Gilroy, one of the men at Outland House, says there is such a band of men, and that they first warn their selected victims by cipher and then kill them offhand."

"Humph! Gilroy had been dreaming, or was playing a joke. I've been in the fur-land longer than he, and never heard of such a band. The term 'Dread Dozen' is new to me, as wholly unsuitable to conditions up North. Dreadnoughts, where romance gives place to plain things. Desperadoes here dispose of their victims without frills. If there was such a thing as the Dread Dozen I should have heard of it."

"Just what Enee Barbeau tells me. He led me to wonder if Gilroy was not fooling me, and now I'm sure of it. But, Masson, see here—there is something I can't understand. The light is fairly good here, so will you look at this paper and tell me if you know what it is?"

Producing the mysterious sheet found at Kashaholwe, the same Gilroy had pronounced the warning of the Dread Dozen, he handed it to his companion. Masson bent toward the light, looked, and then grew flushed of cheek.

"This—this—"

Stammering, he still stared, but suddenly turned upon MacNeill.

"A secret cipher," the Scot added. "Can you read it?"

"Did you get this from a lady?" Masson sharply asked.

"A lady? Certainly not."

"And you don't know what it is? Where did you get it?"

MacNeill told the history of the paper from the night at Kashaholwe, while Reuben watched him closely. When he was done the clerk smiled in a peculiar way.

"At first I thought you were trying to have sport with me, but I see you are sincere. I hate to own up, but you shall have the facts. When I was in Montreal I had this little document in my pocket,

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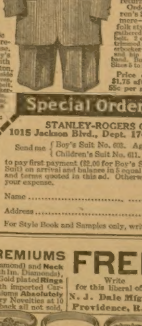

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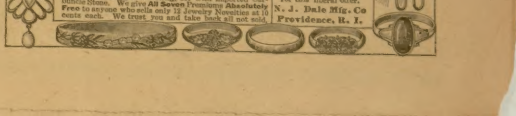

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but lost it in the fight when you acted as my defender. Now, as to where I got it. Look inside yonder shanty. Do you see a red-haired, happy-go-lucky young woman there?"

"Of course you mean Joan."

"Decidedly so. Well, she is the biggest coquette in Rupert's Land. I suppose there is no real ill will in her, but her sense of fair play is utterly lacking. She likes to bring all men to her feet, and when she receives a proposal she will say to her victim that he shall have his answer in writing. Before long he receives what he may, perhaps, be termed a secret cipher, but he can't read it. He has to go to Joan for light, and he gets it—she has made a fool of him! She probably thinks her course sport for her, but no man gets hilarious over it. She accepts nobody, but lures many, and treats all alike. When I proposed—confound my stupidity!—I received this very paper. Of course, it is not a cipher, but just crooked marks. MacNeill, it can't be you have yet asked her to be your wife."

"No, but Gilroy—he said it was the warning of the Dread One."

"Subtract eleven and say, the Dread One. Likewise, you can bet that Gilroy is a victim by the very fact that he was willing to confess, he spun that yarn about a mysterious band of killers."

MacNeill's memory came back, and as he recalled Gilroy's manner when he was questioned, the probability was not to be doubted. Every word was correct, but in his own affairs came with this clearing up of mysteries.

Joan had never loved him, but had been trying to lure him on to a matrimonial proposal, to add another victim to her list. If he called her bluff and the snare he would have received a cipher of his own. His spirits rose. He could forgive her her attacked pride heart, as they had missed the mark, and it delighted him to know she was not grieving because she had given affection he could not return. Coquette that she was, this girl of the woods was a jewel in her way, his valued comrade and good friend.

Realising that Masson deserved great credit for his frankness on an uncomfortable subject, he added fruitful words that repaid his friend for the confession, and the subject was closed. The Dread Dozen could be dismissed as a myth, but no other perplexity remained in full force—why had his coming to Rupert's Land stirred up the White Whelp to such bitter enmity?

He was eager to give information concerning the discovery of Gilchrist's cabin at the earliest possible moment, so, seeing that Veitch and Joan were sitting by the outside fire in earnest talk, he moved at once.

First of all he examined the documents in a place not quite sufficiently lighted, and, finding that all were there, he went into the shanty. Gilchrist and Marjorie were alone, and the[illegible]

[illegible] to the point [illegible]

"Mr. Gilchrist," he said, lowering his voice, "you once gave me a certain mission to perform. That task has been fully accomplished. All that you wanted is now in my possession. The documents are yours to destroy when you wish."

CHAPTER XVII.

AN ARTIST IN WORDS.

THE conversation MacNeill had noticed between Red Wolf and his daughter was even more earnest than it had seemed from the standpoint of an uninitiated observer. Driven by the fire with the soaring light at their faces and the black shadows of the pines elsewhere, Joan had laid her hand caressingly on her father's arm.

"Daddy," she said in honeyed tones, "this is a fine, romantic occasion, isn't it?"

"Well, well," growled the Wolf, gently, "I don't know about the romance, but it's mighty wet here."

"You and I don't care as long as we have each other, do we?"

"Not a bit, bairn. It's a pity, feeble father that would mind the weather when he had his lassie by his side."

Joan leaned on the big shoulder of the factor and looked at him as sweetly as a cooing dove.

"We have aye been the best of friends, haven't we?"

"Hoots, my bonny bairn, more than that. I wadna flatter ye, but I dinna ken anither daughter with so muckle good in her big little heart."

Veitch patted her head and she nestled closer.

"Ever the best of friends," she murmured. "Why not? The wide world over holds not the like of my great, good Dad."

"Will ye list the child!" chuckled the Wolf. "Making love to her ain father, and in the wet o' night at the forest."

"Ah! but you have been father and mother to me, for my motherless, Daddy, daddy! You remember me as babe, and as wilful child, and as a great, bouncing woman, and now as—"

"Aye. Ye'll forget no toss of your bonny head, no muste of your laughter."

"But you humour me, you wilful——"

"Oh! weel, so-so, lassie. Sometimes ye are inclined to storm at your father, but I would rounded nothing at the storming himself, but a good maid ye have always been."

Joan's voice became even more mellow and seductive.

"As good as Gilchrist's daughter?"

"Eh?" exclaimed the startling, and his speech lost its deep content.

"Daddy, I overheard you speak to the chief factor about Gilchrist his daughter."

"Ah, ah!" growled Veitch.

"Father of me, she is all too young to come to Outland House, being no older than I. She is no fit mate for a wise man. What does a mere child like her know? Why, I should say that one's brains never begin to grow until the body stops growing. Marjorie is a good girl, and she and I are fond toward each other and want to love each other, but as matters are we can't do that. I don't want her to come to Outland House, nor does she want to come."

"For the love of man and angel, give me a word to explain all this, Joan!"

"List, ye! No man should permit a mere bairn like you to discuss his wife-plans, but, first and last, I've aye taken to be alone. When Michel Daignault lost his post and was rumored to be dead, I took his snapshot with me and would have married her, but you objected."

"Hotah is a scheming woman! She was never a good wife to Michel, and whose fault was it that [illegible]

"Well, well, I have given Rotah up for good and all."

"Daddy, it is not for me to say you shall live your life for Outland House, but if any comes to Outland House let it be one with the wisdom of years."

"Gilchrist's mouth will learn wisdom as she grows older——"

"But suppose the lass does not want to come? Now, dad, that is Joan that speaks, the Joan that loves you and has aye been your bit child. Daddy, women know secrets. Suppose the lass does not want to come?"

Soft and low was the voice that reached the ears of Veitch, and tender the accents, and the speaker clung to him, her breath fell on his hand, her eyes sought his, and he saw her tears glisten there. His bushy head drooped a little.

"Father," she went on, "once there was a Scotch laddie came from his native Highlands at the age of 15, and entered the service of the Hudson Bay Company. He struggled with cold, hardship and peril, but always manfully, and always he was faithful to the Company, so, after the usual fourteen years as a subordinate, he was made to be a trader. He served on as faithful as ever, no man challenging his honesty, for it was above reproach. Ay, he served on till the years, and his merit was known to the great Company, and he was made a factor. A high office, Veitch of Outland House!"

Joan hugged the tighter and her voice became a mere whisper, but it carried the softness it had possessed before.

"Dear man, he served on, that factor lives today, and he has a daughter, and she loves him, and is proud of his ability, his success, his fearlessness, and she is jealous of his happiness. Ah, me, daddy, his happiness! She would not willingly see him make any mistake in a matter near his deep interests. No, no, for she would see him as happy as he is honored."

The pleading voice ceased, but Joan lay with her head on her father's breast, and her hand fondled his own big hand.

John Veitch, too, was silent. He thought of all she had said. He recalled his long service with the Company, his trials, his humble beginnings, advancement and present position. He thought of the loyal daughter by his side.

But there was more to think about. When, in the days of the Northwest Fur Company, Elias Gilchrist had burned his fingers, John Veitch had been very near the same fire, tho it seemed that nobody knew it. Still, he was not sure but that

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the documents upon which he relied to evermaster Gilchrist would also entangle him if they were made public. Often he had read them, studying, for they were complicated and far-reaching, and the question had been acute, did they, as phrased, also betray his association with the former plot?

Secretly, he had been as much afraid of the papers as Gilchrist was, and he had hoped the chief factor would yield and enable them to burn the papers. Never before had he feared his own weapons against his superior officer as he feared them now.

The Red Wolf thought of more. He knew that some men misjudged his character. He was boisterous, and often so severe in his management of men as to be unnecessarily harsh, and he had sometimes given more heed to success than to justice, but those who suspected that human life was not safe in his hands wronged him. He had laughed at such suspicions in the past.

But now? And there he looked again at Joan. She had dwelt on his honor of long service, and exulted in that honor, and now that honor in her heart was so much with him that discredit to him would wound her sorely.

He shifted his gaze and, thru the door of the hut, saw Gilchrist sitting with sagging shoulders, yet upturning his face as he looked at his daughter, his only other father and another daughter. A wave of something new swept over the Red Wolf. He struggled against it, fighting as he had fought the cold and the other dangers of the far places, but it was not his hour to conquer.

He turned slowly to Joan, speaking in a husky voice.

"Lassie," he whispered, "you are right, and maid Marjorie shall never come to Outland House!"

"Daddy, daddy!" almost gasped Joan, and flung her arms about his neck.

MacNeill, walking among the pines a few yards from the fire and uneasily considering the question of whether he had done well to leave Julie when she bade him do so, saw the long talk between the pair at the center of the camp, and, at last, he saw the Red Wolf enter the shanty and address Gilchrist. What presently followed astonished the rover.

The chief factor leaped up, his face radiant, and grasped Veitch's hand. A while they spoke earnestly, both seemingly delighted, and then, at a word from Gilchrist, his daughter also gave her hand to the Wolf. Next, Joan embraced, and kissed the other girl, and presently they were clasped in each [illegible] arms.

[illegible]ished as the Scot was, he read [illegible]ce thus placed before him. [illegible]t it was no time for intru[illegible]ded away, returning after five [illegible] about to enter the [illegible]

[illegible]t was standing with a packet of papers in his hand, and they were easily recognizable. The chief factor passed them to Veitch, the two men shook hands cordially, and the master of Outland House dropped every scrap into a small fire Indians had made them. The flames seized upon the sheets, blackened them, devoured them, and the mischief that was in them departed forever.

Again MacNeill felt that it was no place for him or an outsider, and he walked on. Overjoyed as he was to know that Gilchrist's troubles were over, his mood was grave. His world was new, the chief factor was finished. What was he to do next? The far-country was a land of skilled men, with occasion for a trapper, voyageur, bushranger, blacksmith and carpenter, but he knew none of these callings. He must work, but what could he do? Conditions barred the inexperienced man on every hand.

Walking in the darkness without heed to his steps, he stumbled over a root and fell to his knees. Perhaps that stumble saved his life, for as he tripped a knife had gashed his coat and a voice sounded harshly—the voice of Kashabowie.

"At him, Jules! Now, now!"

It was a time of great danger, but another voice came immediately.

"We'll have it now, and plenty of it. I will give ye a wee clout. Up with Koh Koy and Bruce of Bannockburn!"

Blows fell upon Haugh and Jules from the rear, and, with a rude weapon hammering right and left, ignorance of the numbers opposed to them, they turned and fled.

MacNeill leaped up. In spite of the darkness he saw a man before him who was flourishing a club, and the tales of a mad Highlander whom he had heard of, but there was something strangely familiar in the voice last heard.

"Mac-body!" said he of the club in broad Scotch, "I doot me not ye are now safe, but mair pressing business calls me. Ken ye where I may find one Mac-Neill?"

"Who asks for MacNeill?" cried the bush exile, eagerly.

"What? What? Who speaks? It cannot be MacNeill—"

"Sir, it is!" exclaimed the Scot. "But you—the darkness—but the voice! Surely, it is not Jamie Lovat?"

"But it is! 'Tis Jamie the chief, Jamie the traitor, Jamie the deserter and false servant!" declared the man with the club.

"Then 'tis Jamie the true-hearted come back to MacNeill."

"Back he is, but sore is the heart he carries. Will ye thrash him most plentiful? He is a thief, and he reared among the old Convenanters!"

"Back to MacNeill, and he is overjoyed to see you, Jamie!"

A little back in the shadows two persons saw master and servant with their clasped hands moving with energy as MacNeill expressed his unbounded delight partly in motion, but the watchers drew back.

"Julie," said one of the two, "let us move away a few yards and leave Jamie with his master. Their hearts are full. Brighter days seem dawning for all—yes, even for Micol Haughan."

"Father," was gently answered, "all will surely be well."

It was the voice of Julie.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PRESENT AND FUTURE.

TEN minutes later there was a call for Julie and her father, and when they came presently MacNeill took Daigneault by the hand.

"Sir," he said cordially, "we have not met since we fought it with swords at the fort. Now, I will not call 'Guard!' but 'Welcome!'"

"Monsieur MacNeil, I think you saved my life that night. The heart of a broken man is warm to you. May the Virgin give you great happiness!"

"Happiness is already mine, sir. A lost lamb has come back from the moor, and the heart of MacNeill is glad."

"'Tis a thievish wolf has come back," grumbled Jamie Lovat.

The Scot laughed his old merry laugh, which had largely been stifled in the furland, but Daigneault broke in eagerly.

"I beseech you, advise me, MacNeill. When Julie and I fled on the river, I secretly wounded myself with my own knife, so that blood dripped to the bottom of the canoe, and, overestimating my hurt, I swooned, and we took to the land. Coming upon Monsieur Lovat, he conducted us to a cave he had found. Then Julie, fearful of the cave's mouth, chanced to see you in the night and delivered the papers to you, she happening for the first time to mention your name in Monsieur Lovat's hearing. Hearing that you were near he insisted upon coming here, and during our talk described a man he had seen with your party so that I believed it was Elias Gilchrist. Urged by both Jamie and Julie I have come thus far; but, sir, is Gilchrist here?"

"He is, and——"

"I depend upon the power and justice of that man to restore me to useful ways. Monsieur, tell me—pray tell me, do you think Gilchrist will receive me kindly now?"

"I do think so, Daigneault, and as I have some influence with the chief factor I will do my best for you. Receive you kindly? Aye, monsieur, and there are other reasons why I believe you may

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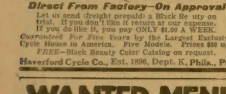

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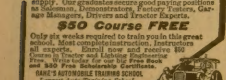

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safely enter yonder hut. Listen!"

The story of the reconciliation between Gilchrist and Veitch was given briefly, and then MacNeill took it upon himself to talk privately with both the Company officials. Success was surely with Gilchrist, and after the Red Wolf had grumbled a while he reluctantly agreed to molest Dalgnault no more. Then the Scot conducted the waiting persons to meet the factors.

There was much to say in this meeting of elements so long hostile, but a pressing duty was to expose Thackley Haugh to the Red Wolf's fate, and this more gravely, but, to the surprise of all, made no defense of his assistant.

"He was a fine man who ever served me," was his brief comment, "but I allow nobody around me who has tried to kill my guest. He shall be driven from Outland House. His enmity to you seems strange, but he was always a very secret man, so lack of understanding now is natural."

Jamie Lovat had been watching Mac-Neill with hungry eyes, and when his master was at liberty he drew him to one side. Unstrapping a bag from his belt he handed it to Ellen.

"Here it is," he announced.

"Here is what?" MacNeill asked.

"The five hundred pounds the Laird of Glenlyrn gave to you when we started for America—every penny of it!"

"But, Jamie—"

"I know it does not make me the less a thief, sir, but it may be useful. Hearken, Master Donald! I fled with the money to New York, but straightway my conscience pricked me sore, and I hastened back to Montreal. But you were gone, but learned where, so I hired a guide to bring me to you. Meanwhile the knave led me into the forest and tried to rob me, but I whipped him soundly and he was glad to run away. I was thereby left alone, lost in the great woods. A hard time I had of it, knowing not which way to travel, until I met with Daignault. But the five hundred pounds, Master Donald, is all there. Every penny!"

"I will not deny that it's very welcome, but far more gladdening is the face of Jamie Lovat than the rye-cake."

"'Tis a useless scamp that has come."

"Useless? This night you saved my life from the White Whelp. Hail, excellent Jamie, old friend and stout staff of his master!"

"Weel, weel, will ye list to the forgiving kindness of it!" exclaimed the servant, blushing because he was called a thief. But, list once more, sir, and you shall hear a fairy tale, albeit 'tis true as any preacher's or mine own soul, when I opened of sin and I was traveling up the Hudson River, bound for Montreal, having but little gold with me, when I left, I stopped one night at a dwelling-house to save hotel bills. What think ye I come on there?"

"I was sandy Campbell, the long-lost brother of your sainted mother. Aye, he lived, and he had come to this land the next day I saw him die. Mac-Neill, man, what think ye happened there?"

"I hope he thought as kindly of my mother as she always did of the wayward wanderer of her kin."

"Long-sleeping love for his own folk stirred his heart—he had never married —and the his grief for the loss of his dear sister, he grew keenly interested in that sister's son when he knew he was in money and trouble. He is now waiting to see you, Master Donald, he gave twenty thousand pounds."

"No!"

"Aye, and the will was witnessed by James Bruce Lovat and three men of the town, where Sandy died, and by the minister. Twenty thousand pounds you are worth in good money, all being safe in the great Bank of Montreal in New York. Master, when ye have children at your knee, tell it not to them, lest they forsake the ways of honest men as when Thief Jamie robbed you and ran away he brought riches to you by his robber act!"

The bush exile had listened with kindly interest from the first, but the climax dumfounded him. He had come to poverty to wealth at one bound, and as if by magic. Neither he nor Jamie could afterward recall what he said, but the excitement ran high, but they finally calmed down.

"Now," said the rover, "let us join our companions yonder."

"Bide a wee," replied Jamie, "with a dismal groan. "I perieve to say I am a murderer, and if I am to be hanged by the neck presently, it will ease the smart of some woodsman to help me to bury my victim."

"What? What's that?"

"Over yonder, somewhere, I stood by a river and shot at a fowl, but, alack! I missed the bird and accidentally killed a man on the opposite side of the stream. I feel that it is no more than courtesy that I find the body and bury it."

"Did you really kill somebody?"

"He fell down when I fired, and tho I was so scared that I ran away at once, he must be dead. Civility demands that I bury him."

MacNeil had a theory, and, questioning, became satisfied that it was Enee Barbeau and himself at whom Jamie had so innocently fired. His description of the spot agreed so well with Jamie's recollections that the latter was satisfied, and his mind set free from the sin of man-killing.

"Since the shooting," he remarked, "I have not prayed for conscience's sake to carry my gun, and have used only a club. Now I can take up the gun again."

Master and servant then retired to camp, and that night all there slept soundly except the guard set to see that the Red Wolf did no dastardly, but no man of them ever saw the White Whelp again. Realizing that his late have made no murder MacNeill passed endurance, he had fled.

There was other work for the guard in the early morning, and when his shouts aroused the sleepers they saw a boat approaching their temporary island with Chief Clerk Garson in charge. Help had come from Outland House.

Shouts of welcome followed, and when the boat landed Veitch and Gilchrist grasped Garson's hand warmly.

"Glad to see you, lad!" he cried jovially. "Your letter led them to come, which seems odd, but you always do things right. Look ye, for a reward you shall have my first vacancy in the fort, in place of Thackley Haugh, discharged. Could you have richer reward?"

Garson could not, so to speak, but there was a sweep of woman's garments and Joan flung herself into the clerk's arms. Then she held out a hand to him, wince, she clung fast for a moment and then turned back upon the rest of the party.

"My husband that is to be!" she announced blithely. "I promised him that, weeks ago, and I like to keep little time to tell of it. Daddy Veitch, which is the richer reward?"

"Heather and hills of Scotland!" gasped the Red Wolf. "And I never suspected it before."

"Year may continued the girl, sweetly, "you've just said that he does all things right. Will you say it again?"

"Say it? I roared the Wolf. "Speak well of a woman-stealer? Garson, you knave, and you, old booby, to punish the pair yet they'll change my mind and ye shall live together the rest of your lives—unless I change my mind!"

Joan smiled, rose to her father and kissed him. Then she looked meaningly at Isasson and MacNeill. It did her good to see them there, and as for her new love, but Garson looked as if he would have preferred longer secrecy.

When breakfast was over, and, as another boat had arrived from the fort, all entered it, the stars was made for Outland House, and presently the voices of the voyageurs rose in clear, lighthearted song.

* * * * *

The White Whelp, Adolph Chenier, was Veitch's quarters. Last three west way and entered the service of the Russian Fur Company, while it was ultimately known that he had returned to his old home in Scotland.

Explanation of his grudge against MacNeill was had, after some difficulty, from Adolph.

Thackley had tired of the fur-land and gained his position by dishonesty before leaving. He began to steal the especially valuable furs, and, having confederates at the fort, to divert trade to that fort from other places.

Word came to him that irregularities had been suspected by the Company and that a man was to be sent to investigate secretly, tho the identity of the evil-doers was unknown to the officials. HHugh took Adolph and Peter to Montreal to try and learn who the coming investigator was, but, as we know, White Whelp's suspicions fell upon Reuben Masson, and the attack on that man followed.

Learning, later, just who Masson was, all fear of him was dispelled, but when MacNeill appeared he was believed to be the person wanted. Resolved that the Company's spy should never reach the district's fort, the attack upon him was made, and, when it failed, other attacks were leveled at the innocent stranger.

Really, the Company had sent no investigator whatever, but that did not matter, since the attacks on MacNeill misinformed foes, who never knew of their mistake.

The so-called 'cipher"—Joan's little joke—had fallen into Haugh's hands in Montreal, had been lost by him at Kashabuiye, and so came into the Scot's possession.

The White Whelp did not land in Scotland at once, but, after crossing the ocean he met with shipwrecks, and all his accumulations were lost.

Thru the efforts of Gilchrist the command of the fort was given to Michel Daignault, who ever afterward followed a life of sobriety. He had Julie

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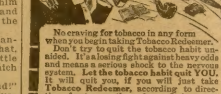

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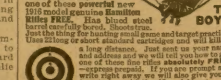

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with him, but Rotah, despairing of winning the master of Outland House, went to Montreal and lived without family or old associates.

Contrary to the expectations of some, Jean made a model wife. She dropped all inclinations to coquetry the day she became Mrs. Garson, and was a good companion to the chief clerk, but to the end of her life she made herself felt in whatever interested her.

Gilchrist and Veitch continued at their respective posts, and the Red Wolf did not drop his way of roaring to his men, but even his former enemies finally admitted that he had no seriously lawless inclinations.

MacNeill gathered in two treasures—the first was twenty thousand pounds, and the second priceless. This was the clear statement of the minister who married him and Marjorie.

In after years MacNeill and his wife divided their time between Rupert's Land and old Scotland, and this was made the more pleasant because it was learned that the Laird of Glenlyon had really never intended to cast the rover & Son's banking house he would have learned of new plans for himself, but, on the other hand, he would never have seen the comely fair-haired Marjorie.

Jamie Lovat was a faithful servant in both places, and when the former exile was in the Red River region he had a devoted guide in Enee Barbeau. The bushranger sometimes grew reminiscent in later days.

"Voila!" he would then add, "we grow gray, Frere MacNeill. 'Tis well, for wisdom comes with gray hairs. Hein?—is it not so? But the light foot and the springy muscle—ah! they are still ours. We know why it is. They drink of lasting youth who live much in the bush!"

The End.

★ ★ ★

STAR-RISE.

When the first star shines forth, the lark,
The singing star of day,
Drops from the heaven. She fears the dark
In that wide trackless way.

So in the heart, when Love awakes,
The joys that used to sing
Fall silent. All the spirit quakes
At the strange shining thing.

★ ★ ★

MAKING HER TELL.

"Who brought you home from Gertrude's last night?" casually inquired the bachelor uncle as he searched in the writing table drawer for a certain envelope.

"Why," answered the pretty girl, quite as casually, "it was George."

"Oh!" commented her relative. "Same one you went skating with Tuesday, isn't he?"

"Why, yes," said the pretty girl. "Yes, now I think of it. I did go skating with George last Tuesday."

"Hm!" murmured her uncle. "Wasn't he here Sunday to tea?"

"You know he was," the pretty girl said, a trifle tartly, dropping her work. "Don't you remember he's fuss you two had over who should have the goo-ey French pastry?"

"Seems to me I do recall it," her uncle agreed. "Well, you certainly must be crazy about that boy."

The pretty girl regarded her uncle with stormy disfavor. "Crazy about me so mad," she said at last. "The way older people get their things. They always thinking you're in love with everybody you look at. Me crazy about George—if it isn't too perfectly ridiculous! Huh!"

"I'll bet you are," persisted her uncle. "Nobody but a girl desperately in love with a man could stand having him around under her feet every minute the way you do. Nobody but a girl with depths of insane devotion would enable her to bear up under his conversation six nights out of every week as you have been doing of late. That proves it."

The pretty girl sat up with a bounce. "I think you are perfectly mean," she announced. "Just because since you've been here George has happened to drop in rather often——"

"Well, of course," the bachelor uncle admitted, "it is really a fine thing for George to keep away from me—to resist the magic of my presence, so to say—but you could easily fire him if he bored you."

"I didn't say he bored me," the pretty girl corrected, regarding her nails. "I shall never speak so of any friend of mine. I think George is one of the nicest men who ever came."

"Tut! Tut!" said the bachelor uncle, seating himself as tho he had a lot to say. "That politic policy stuff won't do. Old stuff! No, you mustn't try to put it over on poor old punky that way. Punky is a keen observer and confess that George is the apple of your eye and that you kiss his photograph good-night every day."

"I certainly do nothing of the sort!" Mabel told him, hotly. "You must have been looking thru college scrap-book to collect such weird ideas. I don't see why you should pick on poor George. Why, Lester and Tom come to see me lots, too."

"Huh!" scoffed her uncle. "Have I ever seen you, with bated breath and your soul in your eyes, listening either to Tom or Lester telling you how he sold a bill of goods at an eighth of a cent per yard above cost to what the firm expected, as you listened to George recently? Have I?"

"I always," the pretty girl cried, indignantly, "I always try to be interested in the life work and occupations of my friends. I'm sure it was quite wonderful the way George got that order away from a lot of salesmen so much older than he is."

Her uncle returned to the attack undaunted.

"I know it's painful," he agreed. "But I don't see why on earth you balk so at coming right out and admitting that you've lost your head over George. It's an ordinary affliction. Lots of people have it.

"You sound like the measles," said the pretty girl with a faint giggle.

"No," signed her bachelor uncle. "They can quarantine for measles and have some hope of saving the patient, but most of these cases are fatal. Come on, now, tell me!"

"Oh, my goodness!" cried the pretty girl. "You're awful! Of course, I—like George terribly if you weren't blind ... but you'd know it without asking."

"Why, I did," her bachelor uncle assured her, dodging the ball of yarn she hurled at him to distract attention from her suddenly pink cheeks. "But I just wanted to hear you say so. I like him quite a lot myself."

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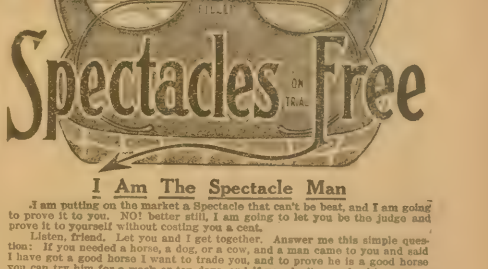

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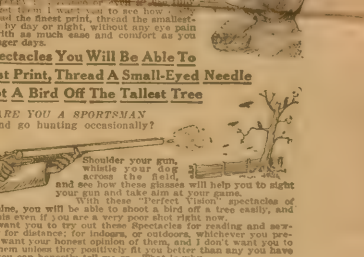

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You may think I am bluffing. Perhaps I haven't convinced you these Gold-Filled "Perfect Vision" glasses of mine are as good as I claim them to be, but you can easily take a chance and make me prove my words. I don't want you to send me a cent. So you have nothing to lose.

Sit down right now—this very minute—and fill out the below coupon at once; let Uncle Sam deliver into your own hands, at your own door, a pair of my 10-Karat Gold-Filled "Perfect Vision" Spectacles, in a handsome plush-lined imitation-silver-tipped Pocket-book Spectacle case, for you to try fully ten days absolutely free of charge. Fill in this coupon and mail it to me at once.

ST. LOUIS SPECTACLE HOUSE, Room 33 ST. LOUIS, MO.

I herewith enclose this coupon, which entitles me to receive one pair of your 10-Karat Gold-Filled Perfect Vision Spectacles, in a fine leatherette, plush-lined, imitation silver-tipped, pocket-book spectacle case, to have upon receipt of the same, for ten days' free trial, to me, so I can try them out, under your guarantee, and if satisfactory in every respect, I will keep them and send you $2.50 in full payment for same; but if for any reason whatsoever, I may wish to return them, I, myself, am to be the sole judge, I will return them to you without paying you a single cent for them, as you agreed in the above mentioned ten days' free trial. Upon this understanding I mail you this certificate, and it is agreed that you will allow a year's wear and I will stick to mine. Don't fail to answer the following questions:

How old are you? How many years have you used glasses (if any)?

Name

Post Office

Rural Route Box No. State

"BEN BOLT"—The Kid That You Were Yourself.

FOOLISH SEX.

Binks is not bright.
He's dead right.
He's a mighty big believer.
He hopes some day
I'll think his way.
The thought my reason grieves'

There's Jinks, he, too,
Also thoughts a foe.
He vows one day I'll know
How deep I've been
In wilful sin
And for his precepts go

They play the same
Old, foolish game,
For that they're nothing loath.
It seems to me
They ought to see
I can't agree with both

Beyond a doubt
The one way out
Is for those men to be
Either—each.
To what I teach—
Then they'll agree with me'

The Lower Classes.

Clarke has a mania for tramping in the country and usually dresses for the part. The result was that one day when he took a seat in a homeward-bound train the young lady opposite him mistook him for a farm hand.

But bless her—her soul was so nigh to bursting with beautiful thoughts that she must speak or go off pop! So she turned patronizingly to Clarke.

"Don't you feel an utterly passionful sympath- with nature's most incarnate averitations," she gushed, with a rapt look in her eyes, "when you are walking on the illimitable undulating mazes or ridins thro the dim aisles of the hori-zon-bound woods, my good man."

The "rough-looking person," as she would have described him, promptly re-plie—

"Yes, that is so, and I am frequently drawn into an exaltation of rapt soul-fulness and bestific inconsecent infinity of abstract contiguity when my foot catches in the furrowed dendelia of the lepos cunicutus—otherwise a rabbit hole."

Defeated" passed the young lady, much surprised. "I had no idea that the lower classes felt like that."

Little Willie's Admirer.

Willie—Mother, Mr. Smithers, across the street, is very fond of me.

Mother—What makes you think so, Willie?

Willie—Why, I heard him say to Mrs. Smithers, I just wish I had that little boy Brown for about ten minutes' Punch.

Careless Hero.

[illegible] not safe mine little pay from drowning.

[illegible]

A Better Way.

Professor Richards of Yale enjoys a joke, and his pupils delight to play it on him when they have heard a new one. Such was the case when one of the students said to him—

"Professor, would you like a good recipe for catching rabbits?"

"Why, yes," replied the professor. "What is it?"

"Well, you crouch down behind a thick bush and—"

"Oh, that's not the way I do it," interrupted the professor. "I first scare the rabbits out of the bushes."

The Manufacturer—"Yes, I think your head would be valuable in my line of business."

Mr Solditop—"You flatter me. What is your business?"

The Manufacturer—"Making billiard balls."

Her Extravagance.

"Taxsah! I's done 'plied for a divo'ce fum mah wife, 'cause o' her dad-blamed strawngance," said disgruntled Brother Waugh. "Jammie tell yo. We had a 'spute 'bout a portion o' de Scriptures, 'twas, and I done simply stepped her down to press mah chargument an' her mistuh immejiately commenced to cuss me out. I considered me on de high road to 'struction an' I 'cluded I'd show her dat mah skull posses right smo de bottom fo' yes sight, he was describing a thrill-ing ball game.

"While cruising in the Mediterra-nean," he said, "we passed an island which was red with lobsters."

"Pish," said one of the politely incre-dulous guests, "lobsters are not red until boiled."

"Of course not," said the undaunted captain, "but this was a volcanic island with boiling springs."

Prodigal.

Nurse—Why, Bobby, you selfish little boy! Why didn't you give your sister a piece of candy?

Bobby—I gave her the seeds. She can plant 'em and have a whole orchard.

Marked Down.

"Every man has got his price."

"Yes, and there are a lot of bargain sales."—Judge.

The Unlearned Captain.

The aged sea captain was well known for his powers of exaggeration. At supper one night he was describing a thrill-ing ball game.

"While cruising in the Mediterra-nean," he said, "we passed an island which was red with lobsters."

"Pish," said one of the politely incredulous guests, "lobsters are not red until boiled."

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Her Mistaken Idea.

"I asked for alimony of $10 a week, I see women getting that right along."

"But, madam," expostulated the lawyer, "your husband is earning only $15."

"What's that got to do with it? I thought the Government provided the alimony.

It Made a Difference.

Near-Sighted Woman—"The boy that let worm bait that caught to be brushed within six inch of my lip."

Fisherman—"It's your boy, ma'am."

"Oh, how? Well him must to be will stop I'll give him a piece of cake."

Where He Never Broke.

"And why did you reform and become a poor but honest mechanic when you were the most talented pure cracksman in the world?" we asked the former criminal.

"I tried to explain to my wife that I had to reform and that my self-respect would not allow me to continue my career, but when I got through explaining she broke off the heavy end of me."

Picks the Winners.

Mrs. Youngwife—"My husband is a very influential man in politics."

Mrs. Oldwife—"Indeed?"

Mrs. Youngwife—"Yes. George has voted in two presidential elections, and both times it has gone the way George voted."—Puck.

Talkers.

Maria was a tender, sentimental little thing, but to put it mildly, hardly a beauty. She was very fond of both, by, but as most from pins rather on un-dim amount of attention and service.

"Oh, George," she complained one night, "I don't believe you really love me! Tell me, would you feel it, dear, if we were parted?"

"Eh—what's that?" said George, brightening up.

"I mean if some one were to come and offer to take me away, give me a beautiful home and every loving care and all the best it money could buy—how would you feel?"

"It depends," he answered, lapsing into moody silence. "School [illegible] or other."

Too Good at the Game.

"You advertised for a boy to [illegible]

"How'd I do

"Like a house afire.

"The last boy I had thought I was too good."

"Too good!

"Yes, I used to match pennies with him

Judge—"Where is your home?"

Prisoner—"Powderville, Va., your honor."

Judge—"Sixty days for vagrancy. That place was blown up yesterday."

Tommy's Mistake.

Tommy in khaki stood in a street of Pretoria town and watched a wedding party drive away. It seemed to be a function of some importance, for the whole town had turned out to witness it. "I say," said Tommy to a bystander, pointing to the bridegroom, "who's [illegible]

"Whose funerals?" he asked of a gen-darme.

"Comprende pas." Poor old Compredde Pas! And it was only yesterday he was married!

His Time Coming.

Patience—"Is that the man she's en-gaged to?"

Patrice—"Yes."

"And he doesn't dance?"

"No, she's waiting until they get mar-ried. She'll make him dance then."

An Excellent Reason.

Indignant Customer—"Barber, why did you drop that shaving cup on my face?"

Barber—"Because it was too hot to hold, sir."

Had Distinguished Himself.

Captain [illegible]

"I knew Jack would distinguish him-self with the regiment, and he has!"

"Well, what has he done?"

"Why, he's the only officer who has not been court martialed."

Found Mother.

Found Mother—"Better than that. Why, his letter says he's right in the guard-house itself!"

Has Nothing to Say.

Poet—"Have you ever had any [illegible]

Publisher—"Yes, one record at college."

"Well," said the [illegible] "I'll hammer forever and a rattling good ballback, and I suspect he plans a good deal of poetic fire when I mention Latin or Greek in his presence he main-tains a discreet silence."

A Finish of Inspiration.

"Tess," hesitated Mr. Justwed, "these cakes are pretty good, but don't you think there ought to be just a little [illegible]

"Your mother made them," interrupted Mrs. Justwed, "and she put in lots of Brooklyne bone.

A flash of inspiration

Quite True.

Young boy (to very stout boy who finds great difficulty in getting into a [illegible]

"Please, you would have been better fed."

Boy—"I shouldn't like to tell the truth, I didn't like da vas der argument was going

He Has Two.

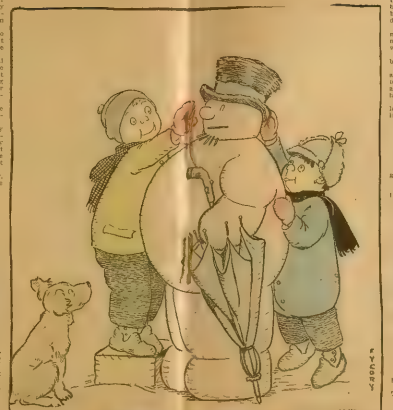
A Cleveland lawyer is now [illegible] a trial one of the jurors suddenly rose from his seat and fled from the court room. He was, however, arrested on his flight before he had left the building and brought back.

"I should like to know what's [illegible] demanded the judge in as stern a manner as he could assume in the lodge, in a lenient tone however, as he knew the man, an eclectic German to be a simple straightforward person.

"Well, your honor, I will explain," the juror began. "You see, you're sentenced me to [illegible] in telling my mind was clear all the time, your honor, to tell the truth, I didn't like da vas der argument was going

The Farmer—"Ah! There you are! Where have you been all this time? And where is your mother? I told you to get back!"

"Huh!" I thought I thought you said shoat! I've just been a-burying of 'er."



Tom—"They say them German guns carry twenty miles."

Dick—"Huh! Dat's nothin'. Our cannon carries a whole load of powder an' shot!"

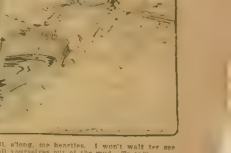
TIRED TIM PUTS ONE OVER

Tired Tim—"Gee, dem cops is after me with a hand car! But I believe I know a trick dat will fool 'em!

"I'll switch 'em onter dis old stub dat leads down ter de old sand-pit dat's now full of water!

"Haw! Haw! Here comes de heroes! Youse'll git a bath dat youse has been a-needin' for a month!

Ah, to it, old sports! Do be a grand an' feelin', I assure yah! Maybe I ain't happy!



Well, along, me heartie. I won't wait for me youse pull yourselves out of the mud. Ta-ta!"

In Bloody Mary's Days

Or, The Nottingham Maid

By T. C. Harbaugh

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CHAPTER XII.

THE situation of Gilbert and old Tyrus in Sir John Talbot's house in Princess square was one of uncertainty if not of peril. They had entered the room from which the cry of help had come only to discover that it was untenanted. Not only this, the two late occupants, one of whom they doubted not was the lost Lady Eleanor Selkirk, had vanished in a manner that quite disconcerted the hunters.

There being but one door to the chamber, they believed that the flight had been made by means of a secret portal, which they began immediately to search for. For some time they were unsuccessful, but the hand of Tyrus suddenly found a spot in the wall that became at once suspicious, and by dint of pressing it, a large panel slid backward and a flight of steps was disclosed. The fever of adventure was now at its height with the two adventurers, and they did not hesitate to plunge downward till they reached a door at the foot of the stairway.

The house, since the cry for help, had grown strangely quiet, but all at once it seemed to resound with the tramping of many feet and the harsh, eager voices of men. Gilbert and Tyrus stood in the darkness side by side, their hands on the hilts of their blades and their blood dancing thru every vein in lilty suppressed excitement.

"Lady Talbot has roused her menials," said Gilbert, in low tones. "They will be upon us in a moment, and——"

A door was flung wide and a waving light revealed ten men in the Talbot livery. The menials halted as the two friends drew back.

"Here they are!" cried the leader of the pack, a burly fellow with a red beard and a deep scar across one cheek. "Here are the robbers!"

Gilbert and Tyrus stood at defiance, eyeing at the ten, who were armed and [illegible] like so many [illegible] of [illegible] wolves.

"Cut them down!" said a woman's voice behind the men. "Show them no mercy—men. They are here on evil bent, and therefore should receive no mercy."

But the sight of the two determined men fully revealed by the light caused the ten to hold off.

"Are they cowards?" continued the penetrating voice. "What shall I say to Sir John when he returns?"

This drove the armed men a step forward, and Gilbert and Tyrus prepared for the battle.

The man with the red beard suddenly threw himself forward, at the same time throwing out his blade, which was deftly caught by Gilbert's rapier and thrown out from his grasp. In another moment the conflict had begun.

While all was behind them, the two lone friends stood their ground like soldiers of fortune, and three of the assailants were struck, each so deeply that they lay where they fell.

"Out on't" cried the woman behind them. "Away the villains! Give no quarter to the robbers!"

Gilbert's blood was now at boiling point, and giving out to Tyrus, he sprang forward and of himself forced the remaining enemies into the chamber behind them. Here he caught a clear glimpse of the woman who had urged the ten to battle. She stood in the middle of a large apartment, the same one in which we first seized the stair with a light. She looked like a queen as she tragedy, with her tall figure perfectly revealed, and her dark eyes full of unnatural fire.

Her men made a last stand in her presence, and Gilbert, reaching them first, parried the well-intended blows and drove them foot by foot against their will toward a door. The man from Nottingham followed with his dangerous weapon, and having forced the last one across the threshold, turned upon Lady Talbot. Had her look been an arrow he would have fallen dead at her feet.

"Well, madam," said he, "where is Lady Selkirk?"

"Not in this house," was the reply, as the glittering eyes lost none of their flames.

"Then we heard her cry for help," insisted Gilbert. "She has been lost these many days, and we have located her in this house."

"Think you so?" and there was a grim smile growing at the speaker's lips. "Lady Selkirk, is it?" She was leaning forward, looking Gilbert fairly in the face. "Why, pray, should I deign to hold the daughter of Lord Selkirk a captive

"God knows, but she is here. We heard her pronounce her own name on the upper floor before you took her with you by the secret door."

"It is false."

"It is true," cried Gilbert, by whose side Tyrus now stood. "Abducted from her garden, Eleanor Selkirk has been brought to this house for a purpose whilst all London has been looking for her."

"Throat her! Throat her!" said Tyrus at Gilbert's ear.

Gilbert threw up his rapier, and before Lady Talbot could move the steel touched her white throat above the necklace of jewels.

"Where have you hidden Lady Eleanor?" he hissed, as the colorless woman fell back with uplifted hand. "Lead the way to her, or by the holy saints I will run my blade thru your neck!"

The beautiful woman gasped. "You would not commit murder!" cried she.

"Tempt me not too far. A rapier has no conscience."

"Nor has the man who holds one at a lady's throat," was the retort.

Gilbert smiled at this and once more heard the voice of Tyrus at his elbow.

"There are strange sounds in the house," said the old man. "She is playing for time, Master Gilbert."

The young man started. "Quick!" he exclaimed, forcing the woman back with the steel. "Produce Lady Selkirk and we go."

"What I cannot do I cannot," was the caustic answer. "She is not in the house."

"Then your menials have taken her away."

"Think you so, ruffian?"

There was now defiance in the woman's eyes. Her stature appeared to increase.

"The door! The door!" cried Tyrus, at the juncture, and he plunged across the room and set his herculean back against one of the carved portals.

He was none too soon, for something fell against the door and old Tyrus laughed outright.

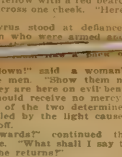
"They are out there!" he exclaimed. "The wolves of Talbot's house want in here."

Mother, Why Don't You Take Nuxated Iron

And Be Strong and Well and Have Nice Rosy Cheeks Instead of Being Nervous and Irritable All the Time and Looking So Haggard and Old?—The Doctor Gave Some to Susie Smith's Mother and She Was Worse Off Than You Are and Now She Looks Just Fine.

NUXATED IRON WILL INCREASE THE STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE OF WEAK, NERVOUS, CAREWORN, HAGGARD LOOKING WOMEN 200 PER CENT IN TWO WEEKS' TIME IN MANY INSTANCES.

THE CHILD'S APPEAL



"There can be no Beautiful, Healthy Rosy Cheeked women without Iron."
F. KING, M. D.

"There can be no healthy, beautiful, rosy cheeked women without iron," says Dr. Ferdinand King, a New York physician and author. "In my recent talks to physicians on the grave and serious consequences of iron deficiency in the blood of American women, I have strongly emphasized the fact that doctors should prescribe more organic iron—nuxated iron—for their nervous, run-down, weak, haggard looking women patients. Pallor means anaemia. The skin of the anaemic woman is pale, the flesh flabby. The muscles lack tone, the brain is fagged and the memory fails, and often they become weak, irritable, despondent and miserable. When the iron goes from the blood the roses go from their cheeks.

"In the most common foods of America, the starches, sugars, table syrups, candies, polished rice, white bread, soda crackers, biscuits, macaroni, spaghetti, tapioca, sago, farina, degerminated corn meal, no longer is iron to be found. Refining processes have removed the iron of Mother Earth from these impoverished foods, and silly methods of home cookery, by throwing down the gravy pipe the water in which our vegetables are cooked are responsible for another grave iron loss.

"Therefore, if you wish to preserve your youthful vim and vigor to a ripe old age, you must supply the iron deficiency in your food by using some form of organic iron, just as you would use salt when your food has not enough salt.

"As I have said a hundred times over, organic iron is the greatest of all strength builders. If people would only throw away habit forming drugs and nauseous concoctions and take simple nuxated iron, I am convinced that the lives of thousands of people might be saved, who now die every year from pneumonia, grippe, consumption, kidney, liver, heart trouble, etc. The real and true cause which started their disease was nothing more nor less than a weakened condition brought on by lack of iron in the blood.

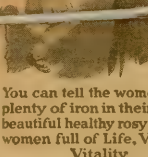
"On account of the peculiar nature of woman, and the great drain placed upon her at certain periods, she requires iron much more than man to help make up for the loss.

Iron is absolutely necessary to enable your blood to change food into living tissue. Without it, no matter how much or what you eat, your food merely passes through you without nourishing the blood and as a consequence you become weak, pale and sickly looking, just like a plant trying to grow in a soil deficient in iron. If you are not strong or well you owe it to yourself to make the following test: See how long you can work or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five-grain tablets of ordinary nuxated iron three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see how much you have gained. We have seen dozens of nervous, run-down people who were ailing all the while double their strength and endurance and entirely rid them selves of all symptoms of dyspepsia, liver and other troubles, in from ten to fourteen days' time simply by taking iron in the proper form. And this after they had in some cases been doctoring for months without obtaining any benefit. But don't take the old forms of reduced iron, iron acetate, or tincture of iron simply to save a few cents. The iron demanded by Mother Nature for the red coloring matter in the blood of her children, is alas! not that kind of iron. You must take iron in a form that can be easily absorbed and assimilated to do you any good, otherwise it may prove worse than useless. I have used Nuxated Iron widely for years and have found its severe aggravated conditions with unfailing results. I have seen many other physicians to give it a trial, all of whom have given me most surprising reports in regard to its great power as a health and strength builder.

Marvel athletes and prize fighter has won the day simply because he knew the secret of where strength and endurance and filled his blood with iron before he went into the affray; while many another has gone down in ingloriously defeat simply for the lack of iron."

Dr. Howard Jones, late of the United States Public Health Service said, "It should be brought home to the minds of the younger as well as the older women of America, what a wonderful change will take place in many cases when Nuxated Iron is taken; how it will cause the sunken cheeks to fill and bring the roses to their cheeks, the sparkle to their eyes and the elasticity to their step. Every function of nutrition will be stimulated and regulated and a sense of well being the French call bien entre will get up with them in the morning and accompany them at night to court refreshing sleep. Men, too—those who, in the strenuous strain of business competition burn up rapidly, have great nervous energy here is a source of power, and renewed strength and endurance which will be found unfailing."

NOTE—Nuxated Iron, which is prescribed and recommended above by physicians in such a great variety of cases, is not a secret remedy but one which is well known to druggists, and which many druggists have been prescribing for their patients for years. It is entirely harmless, does not injure the teeth, make them black, nor upset the stomach; on the contrary, it is a most potent remedy in nearly all forms of indigestion as well as for nervous, debilitated people. The manufacturers have such great confidence in nuxated iron, that they offer to forfeit $100.00 to any charitable institution if they cannot take any woman under 60 who lacks iron, blood, strength or endurance, and in two weeks' time increase the iron contained in her blood at least 100 per cent as shown by any standard test, or refund your money. It is sold by druggists everywhere, but to avoid disappointment be sure and get the genuine. It is dispensed by all good druggists.



You can tell the women with plenty of iron in their blood—beautiful healthy rosy cheeked women full of Life, Vim and Vitality

Dr. Ferdinand King, New York physician and author, tells physicians that they should prescribe more organic iron—Nuxated Iron—for their patients—Says anaemia—iron deficiency—is the greatest curse to the health, strength, vitality and beauty of the modern American Woman.—Sounds warning against use of metallic iron which may injure the teeth, corrode the stomach and do far more harm than good; advises use of only nuxated iron.

Lady Talbot fell back to the table and stood there like a lioness at bay.

"In, my men, in!" she cried at the top of her voice. "These fiends seek my life."

But old Tyrus did not yield. He had braced himself, and his stout back was a bulwark which the fury of those outside could not overcome.

"Lock the door!" shouted Gilbert, and the lock clicked at his word.

A triumphant smile gathered at Lady Talbot's lips. Her jeweled hand darted toward the lamp on the table, and the next instant she had flung it against the nearest wall, enveloping the entire chamber in darkness.

Gilbert felt his blood leap thru every vein at this; he struck out with his blade, no great was his fury, but it clenved nothing but air, and a curse sprang from his heart.

The hand of Tyrus found his wrist in the gloom and closed there like the jaw of a vise.

"No Lady Eleanor tonight," he heard the old man say. "But we have found her prison, and that is enough. Quick! Back to the hall. The gates of hell will be upon us in a second. This is the devil's own trap."

The friends turned in the darkness and bolted for the door, which they fortunately found in the gloom. Gilbert jerked it open, and they sprang into a place as dark as the one they had just left. The front portal was now the only barrier between them and the fog-enveloped street.

The crashing of a door fell upon their ears. Lady Talbot's menials had reached her.

Tyrus wrenched at the lock, but it did not yield. There were cries, shouts, curses in the adjoining chamber. The old man looked at the brazen lock with his heavy boot; it yielded and fell to the floor.

Now, out of this viper's nest!" Gilbert heard him cry. "We'll hold the upper hand when we come again," and as a breath of air and fog assailed them from the outside world, they sprang across the step and landed on the stones beyond.

"A miss is better than a mile," laughed Tyrus. "We've found Lady Eleanor's trail, at any rate."

"But that doesn't point the way to Lady Eleanor's prison. Come us tonight, good Tyrus. Come," and they vanished in the fog.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE fight in Sir John Talbot's house convinced both Gilbert and Tyrus that they had discovered a weakness in Lady Talbot, the lost Countess, but Montjoy was not so much interested in this as he was in the disappearance of Lucy Lalove of Nottingham.

It would fain have gone back into the house, [illegible] of liveried ruffians, so eager was he to clutch the [illegible] wand offered for the return of Lady Bellfield, and it was with some difficulty that Gilbert overcame his desire.

"We must trace Lucy," said he to old Tyrus. "I am quite sure that the chaise that took her away from Regent street was under the control of a rejected suitor named Rupert Searoll, who must have seen you enter London with the girl."

"It may be so," responded Tyrus, still looking back at the house in the fog with wicked eyes, "but where we find Lucy I go straight back to Sir John's and wreat Lady Selkirk from his clutches."

"And you shall not go alone," answered Gilbert. "I like a little adventure myself."

They now made off as rapidly as possible, knowing nothing of Captain Blunderblade's adventures at Red Robin Inn, and in a few minutes were lost in the fog.

Meantime the beauty of Nottingham was in another part of London, whither she had been conducted by her captor. She stood at a grated window looking out over the dim city, and her heart had fallen a victim to the lies of Rupert Searoll, who, knowing of Gilbert's presence in London, had promised to convey her to him. It was not until she found herself in this strange apartment that his disguise was spread, and despite her pleadings, she was shut up in the place and was under lock and key.

Her heart sank into unmeasurable depths, and she saw how extremely foolish she had been to listen to the lies of the man. But Rupert Searoll had quickly fell that she was completely in his power.

Far away stretched the lights of London in myriads as the fog dimly revealed them. She heard an unseen clock strike the hour of 9, and the sound terrified her more than ever. Since coming to the house she had seen no one but her captor, but now his step had receded in disgust, and her hatred of the man grew in intensity.

Would Gilbert ever find her? She believed that Tyrus would eventually find his master, but before that time she might have been spirited off London was a veritable den of strange places and ways which must be known to Rupert Searoll.

Her thoughts were those of almost utter despair as she looked out into the window counting off the hours struck off in the invisible clock tower, and more than once her limbs nearly gave way beneath her.

If she had a jailer, and she doubted not that she had, she knew him by sight, and more than once she feared that she had been left alone in the strange house. The room contained but little furniture. There was a single couch in one corner, and in the middle of the room stood a table with a chair and an old-fashioned

There is no telling how she had circumnavigated the apartment which was almost circular, and each time she had come back to the latticed window to brood over her hopeless situation.

The clock had struck the hour of two, when she was startled to hear a key turned in the lock, as she whirled at the sound, and the door flew open. She turned pale as she saw the abductor, who stood in the middle of the room staring at her with a smile of triumph at the corners of his nostrils.

The young lover—he had just passed his twenty-fifth year—was richly dressed in velvet, and was the most adventurous rascals of the day, and at his side hung a new sword much like a rapier. For a few moments he stood there upon the loveliness of his captive, and then he advanced across the carpet with a little swagger.

"So you are still here—you had to ejaculated, with a malicious grin at which Lucy turned her head away. "I was a little afraid you might take flight and leave this pretty nest."

The girl quivered at this jest, and as her bosom heaved with anger, her dark eyes seemed to emit flashes of resentment.

"When one has the lock and key," she said, "how can one escape?"

He leaned against the edge of the table and regarded her in silence a few moments.

"But for your infamy I would not be here," she exclaimed, her voice trembling with grief out of the chamber. "But for the indignity you have forced upon me I might now be happy."

"In the arms of Gilbert Montjoy!" he laughed. "All is counted fair in war and love," he replied, "and a man who nets the bird is the one to hold it."

A proud curling of her lip told plainly how she held this man, and she turned away.

"Not quite so fast!" cried Rupert. "A lover who is not hunted for attempted murder is far better than one who is."

"What's that?" she exclaimed, whirling upon him with her white hands clinched.

"You do not know, then," Gilbert Montjoy has under the ban. See! Here is the evidence."

With this he drew from beneath his doublet the reward offered for Gilbert's apprehension, and she saw the Queen's seal at the bottom. He held it close to the light that she might read the words, and her flashing eyes went over them in a moment.

"It is a lie!" she cried, as her face red-

(Continued on Page 17.)

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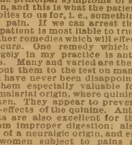

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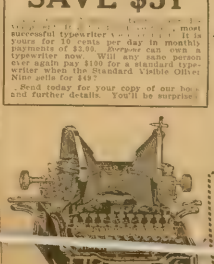

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In Bloody Mary's Days.

(Continued From Page 15.)

dened. "Gilbert would commit no crime, and——"

"What if your words were borne to her majesty?" interrupted Searoil.

"You may carry them to her if you like," in defiant tones. "I stand ready to repeat them in her royal presence."

"By my sainted mother, you have spirit!" was Rupert's exclamation. "Such a woman as you is worth winning."

"But all women are not won by force."

"Eh?"

He was so near her now that she drew suddenly to one side and looked him fearlessly in the face. He suddenly dropped his eyes, but as quickly raised them again. How at that moment she wished she had this man's strength! How she panted, girl that she was, to be able to take the hilt of his sword!

That he had been lately at the wine she could see by the snaky glitter in his eyes. She could read the secrets of his very soul, and she wished that she could send him backward with his own blade buried in his own bosom.

"You shall have another meet by and by," he suddenly resumed. "I stand in Queen Mary's favor and she has knighted me. I am now Sir Rupert."

"A title which you have already disgraced."

"You jest, my love. You know that a knight always loves fair women."

There was no reply, but the deep orbs of Lucy Lallire flashed anew.

"I am going, my love," said Rupert. "Time will come when I will produce my bride of the cliffs at court, and in all London there will not be a fairer one."

Lucy was once more before him, her regal figure drawn to its true height, and with one white hand resting on the table she confronted him in the majesty of beauty and innocence.

"Long before I am presented at court as your bride there will come a day of retribution!" fell in startling tones from her ashen lips. "The eye of Rupert Searoil? Better death a thousand times, or a beggar's garb in the slums of London!"

His laugh was heartless. At the end of it, still gazing upon his beautiful captive, he went to the door and laid his hand on the latch. Looking back over his shoulder, he regarded her with a brutal leer. The wine was at work.

"You have eaten nothing, my love," said he, with a grimace. "I will see that you have your fast."

"Not with anything your tainted hands touch!" was the instant retort.

Birds only sing once. He laughed, and with a last look he was gone.

A short time later the heavy key grated once more in the door, and a small man with white hair came in, a well-supplied tray in his hands. He set the food upon the table with a bow to the silent girl, but in an instant Lucy was upon him, one hand at his throat and the breath almost choked out of his body.

But she had caught an eel, for the old man slipped out of her grasp with the alacrity of youth, and his hand jerked from his throat-hold the long dagger which he raised above his head. The blade swished thru the air as he struck out and Lucy missed its point by an inch.

"Don't play with old Cundit," he hissed. "He can bite if he is three-score and ten!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THREE days passed, and Captain Blunderblade's exchequer was running low. The big fellow, after his unceremonious exit from Red Robin Inn at the hands of Mistress Cundit, stood for pleasant thoughts. He had failed to find Gilbert Montjoy, and the reward offered by Queen Mary for Gilbert's apprehension seemed as far off as ever. Still he did not despair, albeit hope was flagging in his breast.

He had two strings to his bow, and one was the finding of the lost Lady Selkirk, the other to get into touch with what might be in the hands of her majesty he feared to play a hand against the royalty of the realm.

The third night after his discomfiture at the inn found him slipping down one of the narrow streets of London with the movement of a cat. He was muffled in a dark cloak, and his portly figure was made small as possible, and he strolled every semblance of a light.

The alehouses had missed him, and no wonder. He had been spotted in a disturber of the peace supposed to prevail in those places, and there were men who had vowed to get rid of his mug-breaking whims.

At length Captain Jack halted in his course, and came to a tree to where there was the merest semblance of a light. He stood a little while in the dark, his hands before refreshing upon the scanty sill, and erelong he resolved to enter.

When he raised the latch and opened the door there were little ejaculations of astonishment among the several men inside, but Blunderblade put on a look of innocence and sat at one of the tables. He knew he was not welcome in the place, but he tried to dissemble and enjoy his mug in quiet.

He had finished the second mug when he rose to go. An excitement something hurtled past his head, and he turned with a growl as an ale mug smashed against the wall. In an instant there was an uproar, and but for the poor aim of those who did not want him in the place he might have been felled by the missiles.

It was a fortunate escape, and when he reached the street he congratulated himself on his luck. He made off at all speed, running like a deer for several squares, and did not stop till he was almost out of breath. He had come to a stop in the nick of time, for he was on the eve of a collision with a man who drew back with a curse.

"Do you think I want to be butted like a goat?" growled the stranger. "Can't a gentleman walk the streets of London without being struck by a catapult?"

Jack drew back and stared at the speaker, who was a stout man to be sure, well nourished and not bad looking.

"I beg pardon," said Blunderblade.

"Where are your eyes?" flashed the other. "You're a big owl, and I'm not your mouse."

The words did not set well on Jack's temper and his choler was apparent.

"Maybe," cried he, ..ing his hand on the sword he carried, "you'd like to have a passage of arms with Captain Jack Blunderblade."

"So that is your name?" was the re- ... from what I've heard of you you're the foulest rascal in London."

"That's an insult."

"Take my words as you will," was shot into his teeth. "It would be a pity for my sword to bleed you. It has tasted better blood, but it seems to me that letting out a little of yours would pay a good many debts."

Jack by this time had backed against a wall and was fuming furiously, but at the same time he was cudgeling his brains how to get rid of this man.

"You don't know me," the other man went on. "I'm called Tyrus, and I came recently from Nottingham in search of my master."

"Oho!" said Jack. "Then I opine that your master is one Gilbert Montjoy."

"He is none other," replied Tyrus. "As to a tilt with you, I am not seeking it, but all the same I'm minded to slit your weazen for you."

"As to the murder business, it is a lie!" almost shouted Tyrus. "My master was mesmerized by Jeanne Stafford, who would fain have her father."

"That's a good story to tell the Queen," laughed Blunderblade until his fat sides shook. "I'll take you before the magistrate and have an investigation."

"When?"

"Right away."

The words had scarcely left his lips before he found himself forced against the wall with the point of a sword at his throat.

"No magistrate tonight for old Tyrus," was sent viciously into his face. "Come, your Queen that Montjoy is still at large, and that he has old Tyrus to stand by him."

"Let me go and, marry, I will."

"When I am thru with you, you big fish. Your wife wants to see you."

"My——wife?"

"Yes, the woman whom you threw into the Thames. She's a little creature and you have treated her like a dog."

"Jack Blunderblade, the coward!"

The swashbuckler was silent as he edged along the wall, but a sharp sword prick brought him up standing.

"Have mercy, man! That blade of yours has a devil's wall, but a sharp sword prick brought him up standing.

"I sharpened it myself in old Notting-

(Continued on Page 23.)

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The Castaway Boys

Or, LOST ON A RAFT

By St. George Rathborne

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CHAPTER I.

CAUGHT UNAWARES.

"AW, COME on, Specs! What's the matter with you? I only want you to take one round-trip over the river and back, just to see how my dandy raft works with these homemade oars. Tumble aboard, now, and lend a hand."

"But Andy, I ought to be getting home, you know. It's late in the afternoon, and I was kept a lot longer than I figured on at the dentist's. Fact is, I wouldn't be here right now only I promised to come down to the river and see how you were getting along with your raft-boat."

"Pshaw! Time yet before the supper bell rings, Specs. I've worked so hard on this same contraption that I know I just couldn't sleep a wink tonight if I didn't take one trial trip across the Maurice River and back again. Step aboard, and please your chum, Specs. You more'n half promised, you know."

"It looks a lot like rain, too, Andy."

"Shucks! That's an old story, with the cloudy sky. We've been lucky enough to miss most of the big rains they had away up North. Come along, Specs!"

"But it strikes me the current is some swifter here in the Broad Channel than we've generally found it, Andy."

"So much the better for showing what my new method of propelling a raft is worth. Here's your seat, Specs, and this is your oar. I'm taking the one that calls for most of the pulling, going across; and on the return trip, why, I'll change about with you. There you are, and now we'll start on our little journey."

"Little journey" indeed! If Andy Purdue, when he so flippantly uttered those words, could have lifted the curtain that screened the immediate future, and glimpsed in some measure the wonderful things that lay just ahead of him, he would never have started off so indifferently. But, of course, being only an ordinary boy, and not gifted with second sight, he could not possibly suspect what lay in store for himself and that confiding chum of his.

So Specs" Whittaker, still half-reluctant, as the some intuition warned him that he was making a great mistake in yielding to temptation, allowed himself to be persuaded into trying the clumsy contrivance Andy had fashioned from planks and other timbers picked up along the river bank, and fastened together with spikes, and odd pieces of rope, the latter possibly purloined from the family clothes-line at home.

They pushed out, and were soon splashing their way across the broad and usually shallow water that marked a basin of the little Maurice River, flowing past the town of Guilford, perched high on the western bank.

Andy was an unusually robust boy, strong and venturesome, and full of a knowledge of things connected with outdoor life, from fishing and hunting, to making a pretty fair camp. Some of this he had managed to pick up thru a limited practical experience, and the balance was acquired by means of extensive reading along his favorite lines, from "Robinson Crusoe" down to the latest edition of a sport magazine that his father took regularly.

Andy was quite proud of his muscular ability, and there was not a fellow in all Guilford who could excel him in gymnastics, running, rowing, swimming, football, or in fact at anything that called for a display of strength and agility.

Strange to say, and it seemed the irony of fate to some people, Andy had taken to his heart as his special chum little "Specs" Whittaker, believed to be the most timid boy of their class, and a fellow whose nature would hardly allow him to impale an angleworm on a fishhook because it wriggled so as if in pain. And yet frequently exact opposites seem to get on better together than two boys who are much alike.

Andy took the special delight in standing between his smaller and weaker companion, and trouble. He would willingly perform prodigies of valor just to hear Specs express his ardent admiration for such prowess; and this was always sincere, for Specs had not willingly deceive any one, or do a mean act.

More than once Andy had thrashed some bully who was responsible for the treatment of his comrade; and possibly the punishment on these occasions might have been even more severe than Specs begging him to let the miscreant go, because he was sure it had not been really meant.

And indeed, the two did seem to get along famously. Andy's roughness was often, temporarily, softened by the influence of his more gentle chum; and a word from Specs often had a wonderful influence on the former. Even some of the girls in Guilford called Andy, simply because he loved to stalk in the woods, trying to bring down game with his rifle, a lordly matched [illegible] firm of Andy & Co."

It was in the spring of the year, the season was well advanced. There had been some rains of late, but nothing to be compared with what the reports further north had indicated. For stories of floods had drifted down to Guilford, and the good people of the peaceful town on the little Maurice River congratulated themselves that they were so far removed from out of the general track of the storms.

Both boys were pulling steadily at the clumsy oars. Just as Andy had said, he had taken the side where the most force had to be exerted in order to baffle the current of the river. Still Specs had all he wanted to do to keep his end up.

Of course it almost goes without saying that the Whittaker boy had been given his nickname because he wore glasses, for his real name was Arthur, tho he heard it oft at home and in school from the teachers. His eyes had been a little weak, and an oculist had recommended that he wear spectacles for possibly three years or so, when it was believed he might outgrow the difficulty.

Andy's father was the leading general merchant of the town, while Specs's father practiced law, tho also connected with the local bank, for he was a man of considerable means.

"Say, she goes pretty fine, don't you think, Specs?" remarked Andy, when they had managed to get about halfway across the broad channel; for the river had considerably swollen, its worn propery widened to three times its ordinary breadth, tho shallow in the bargain, and with a lazy current.

Specs gurgled something in reply. The truth was he did not have any too much faith in Andy's boasted craft, the task was as difficult as he could manage. But nevertheless he tugged faithfully, for he had consented to start, once he started on anything, if his body did lack the muscular accomplishments of his chosen chum.

"We hold our own pretty well, too, you see," continued Andy, exultantly. "These rowlocks we made took very fine, but they do the business all right, just as I expected they would. We could carry quite a pile of stuff on this raft, Specs, suppose now we were visiting an old wreck, and you were my man Friday. Gee! How I'd like to have half a chance to experience some of the dandy times old Robinson had come to him."

"Oh, please quit, Andy!" gasped the other, with a perceptible shiver when you talk that way. I can't see anything important in being forced to make your clothes out of spreading and live on all sorts of awful stuff, when you're accustomed to the best the market affords."

"That's just because you've always been soft, and like to take things easy, Specs. You've never worked much, or gently able [illegible] any kind with an extra strong current; "now, with me it's just the opposite, because I glory in meeting all sorts of troubles, and mastering the same. I'm never so happy as when I'm up against some knotty puzzle, and finding out the answer. Give a few more good pulls, and we'll make the bank. Then we'll rest a bit, you've had."

Five minutes later they stood on the shore looking back toward the other side of the river. Specs, the breathing faster than usual on account of his recent exertions, could not keep from congratulating Andy quietly. It seemed to him that never before had that further shore of the little Maurice River looked so distant. Then, too, the afternoon was waning fast.

"Come, let's start back, Andy," he soon ventured. "I hate to be caught out there with night coming on so fast. And it strikes me it's a heap wider than usual when we cross over here in summer for the fishing."

"Perhaps it is," remarked Andy, carelessly, "but what does that matter to us? We can go back as easily as we came, as we crossed to this side. If you're feeling rested fairly well, why, I expect we might as well start. But pshaw! it's only a little picnic to me, you know. I could keep this up all afternoon long, and never mind it."

"That's because you're as strong as an ox, Andy," admitted the other, giving his companion an admiring glance that caused Andy to puff out his manly chest with the air of one who had full confidence in his ability to accomplish things such as would seem impossible in the eyes of less sturdy fellows.

So they once more commenced working at the rude oars, and the bank was soon left quite a little distance behind. If anything Specs labored at his task with greater zeal than before, just as tho his fears had gained a stronger hold upon his imagination.

"Listen, Andy," he suddenly broke out, "what do you suppose that queer noise can be? It sounds like railway trains crossing a big trestle, but there isn't any such thing within five miles of Guilford. And, Andy, don't look behind the boys are particularly noisy around about the town? Hear them yelling, will you? I wonder if another mad dog scare has broken out! Why, it keeps getting and louder all the time! And see those folks on the bank waving their hands at us like they were crazy! Oh, Andy! What can it all be about? Do you think an earthquake is coming along; or can

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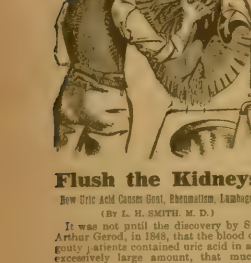

Flush the Kidneys

How Uric Acid Causes Gout, Rheumatism, Lumbago

(By L. H. SMITH, M. D.)

It was not until the discovery by Sir Arthur Gerod, in 1846, that the blood of gouty patients contained uric acid in an excessively large amount, that much attention was paid to this subject. Later scientific men learned that in gout, also rheumatism, the kidneys do not work properly to throw off the uric acid poison; consequently uric acid crystals are deposited in and about the joints, in the muscles, where an inflammation is set up, causing intense pain.

Hague has said, that "gout is rheumatism, and rheumatism is gout." If uric acid is formed in excess within the body it is passed off by the kidneys, which act as a filter to pass off this poison. If the excess is not excreted by the kidneys, it is stored up in the blood thru the tissues. The choice sites for such storage are in the joints, muscle-sheaths, where the circulation is weakest, and where lies the ability of the blood is lowest. Consequently we must do everything to throw off this uric acid poison, and simple methods are to flush out the kidneys by drinking 6 to 8 glasses of water between meals. A pint of hot water a half hour before meals.

Take Anuric (double or triple strength), three times a day for awhile. Invigorate and assist the kidneys to flush out the uric acid poisons. During winter months the circulation is apt to be sluggish and the blood stream retarded. If uric acid is present it is apt to clog the capillaries. This accounts for the acute conditions, such as headache, neuralgia, gastric disturbances, and dull mind. As the condition progresses, we often have lumbago, disease of the heart and arteries, breaking down of the kidneys, rheumatism and gouty symptoms. Eat less meat, drink more water, and take Anuric (double or triple strength) after meals and at bed time for several weeks at a time, and you will be free from uric acid and the diseases that follow.

that be thunder, and is an awful storm going to break on us?"

Andy, too, had stopped working his oar, and seemed to be using his eyes and his ears to the best advantage. Speech, turning to look at the face of his stanch partner, was horrified to see that Andy had actually turned ghastly pale, something he had never known to happen before in all his association with the Purdue boys. Yes, Andy was showing positive signs of being badly frightened.

"Oh! What is it, Andy?" gasped poor Specs, dropping his oar in order to wipe off his companion's cold coat sleeve; and there was something about the piteous appeal that seemed to remind the other of his claim to be the protector of his weaker companion; so Andy clinched his teeth very hard in order to get back his grit, and even forced a grim smile, such a hollow mockery of one, that it hit Specs as he would cut his throat.

"Specs, be brave now, and don't get scared, but something terrible's gone and happened! I believe that big dam up at the Whiting mill must have given way, and the flood's coming rushing down the valley right now. Grab up your oar, and we'll try to gain the shore before it reaches us. Hurry, Specs, it's getting a heap louder every second, sure it is. Pull like everything, Specs, pull, pull!"

CHAPTER II

A LOYAL CHUM

NOW, even amidst all that terrible excitement it seemed that Andy did manage to keep a certain grip on himself. The shore they had recently left was not much more than half as far away as the one for which they were bound. Possibly some boys might have thought of trying to gain the closest harbor; but Andy realized how a certain amount of precious time would have to be wasted in turning the clumsy raft, for the seats were so fixed that the rowers could only pull in the one direction.

Besides, something else must have pulled them toward the further bank. Hence it was that quarter, and with a horrible calamity threatening Guilford, it was only natural that the lads should feel the drawing power of that family roof.

Perhaps poor Specs was wildly wondering, as he took hold of his oar again with those trembling hands of his, whether, alas! he would ever again sit beside the dear old fireplace where so many happy evenings had been passed when the wintry storms howled without.

But at least he pulled on his oar frantically, pulled while his teeth caused drops of blood to ooze from his lower lip, and the mouth to come in gauge. Andy, too, was working with almost superhuman force, and the raft began to gain a momentum such as its proud builder could never have dreamed it capable of.

Thru those fascinating seconds the boys tugged with might and main in hopes of reaching their haven of refuge, this final grinding and roaring noise seemed to grow sensibly in volume. To the excited imagination of the two who were in such dire peril, of course the noise appeared greatly magnified compared with what it might have seemed had they been safely lodged ashore, with those other fellows who ran up and down, and waved their arms, and shrieked all sorts of directions out at them like boys possessed.

Specs, drawn by a dreadful species of fascination, which he could not resist, no matter how hard he tried, turned his face so as to stare up-river way. It was from that quarter all the rumbling and roaring came; and what he suddenly discovered in the light of that closing afternoon caused his timid heart almost to stand still with abject fear.

"Oh! Look, Andy, would you?" was his characteristic cry; but there was hardly any need for him to say this, for already Andy had seen the same spectacle.

Indeed what the two boys on the raft saw was quite sufficient to send a cold chill to the hearts of grown men who were reckoned the bravest of the brave, let alone a couple of high school lads not yet sixteen years of age.

The van of the terrible flood was in plain sight. It could not be mistaken, for its entire line across the river bed and beyond was plainly marked by first of all, a distinct billow of foamy churning waters, amidst which could be seen mingled logs rolling and turning upside down in the grip of the onrolling waters; while just beyond all manner of strange flotsam and jetsam appeared, heaving and tumbling in sickening confusion—fence rails, parts of chicken-coops or pig-sties, with doors from unlucky barns, and perhaps half a shingled roof to tell of a wretched human habitation that had been caught in the first flush of the bursting flood.

As a peculiar fact, altho an enormous amount of pent-up water must have been suddenly released when that dam of the paper-mill went out up the valley, it did not appear that the initial wave was as high as might have been expected. On the contrary, the water continued to get deeper by quick degrees once it had passed a certain point.

But to the excited imagination of Andy & Co. that advance was looked to be of stupendous proportions; and they shivered to think that it was apparently bound to overtake them long before they could manage to gain the friendly shore.

Now Andy would undoubtedly have thought of jumping overboard and swimming frantically for the bank only he remembered with dismay that Specs had never been able to make more than a few ineffectual strokes at a time. This meant that he, Andy, would have to try to carry his chum on his back, something he had often done in a spirit of fun, when they were in bathing together.

This was an entirely different matter, for naturally his progress thru the water must be delayed considerably if he had to help Specs, so that nothing would be gained in the end, and they might as well stay where they were. For of course such a thing as his looking out for himself was not to be considered for even half a second! Andy was not built that way.

Again did the boy show that in a time for quick thinking and prompt acting he could rise to meet the situation. Since they could not gain the shore in time to avoid being caught by the angry flood, and must stick to the raft as a place of refuge, why, it only remained to make themselves as secure as the limited conditions allowed.

There were several extra pieces of rope aboard, ends which had not been actually needed when the architect and builder of the raft completed his proud job and upon these Andy seized hurriedly, abandoning the oar in the clumsy rowlock.

And once more it could be seen that his chief fear was in connection with his chum. Specs, being almost paralyzed by fear, and also a much weaker fellow in the bargain, ought to be looked after first. As for his own ability to hang to the raft as long as the structure held together, Andy did not seem to doubt this one bit.

So he proceeded to pass the rope around the waist of Specs, who allowed him to do as he wished, possibly understanding what was in Andy's mind, and willing to trust himself wholly in the charge of his stronger chum. Andy had never talked him in an emergency. There may have flashed thru the brain of Specs just in that terrible moment how once, when they were passing thru a big [illegible] angry bull had started [illegible] being unable to reach shelter of the fence in time what had Andy done but snatch out his favorite red bandanna handkerchief, and with great alertness lured the bull to [illegible] cleverly eluding all his charges just as he had been an experienced [illegible] matador dress, until finally he [illegible] had gained the fence, when Andy [illegible] descended to escape also.

Yes, Andy was [illegible] when an occasion arose [illegible] indeed a comfort [illegible] Specs Whittaker to feel [illegible] chum's presence. Had he been alone on the raft when that great flood bore down the river, he knew very well nothing could have saved him from instant destruction; and consequently this story would never have been written.

"Get as good a grip as you can, and hold on like everything!"

The [illegible] was [illegible] was the confusion [illegible]

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that Specs just barely caught the words and no more. What with the shrieks of the dancing boys on the bank, the blowing of every whistle in town, as well as the ringing of church bells, together with the horrible grinding and roaring of the charging flood, the combination went to make up a chorus that would be remembered all thru the life of poor frightened Specs Whittaker. Often when suddenly awakened in the dead of night by some unusual sound, he was bound to fall to shivering, experiencing once more that feeling of mingled horror and dismay.

So rapidly had Andy worked with that rope-end that there was really time enough for him to have lashed a second piece around his own body, and thus made assurance doubly certain. And Specs was thrilled to the core to see his comrade actually start to use the second piece of clothes-line as he had the first, in fastening him to the raft. He wanted to shout and beg Andy not to do it, but to make use of the rope on his own account; but it seemed as if some species of dumbness must have taken possession of his vocal cords—at least, while he went thru all the motions of crying out Specs could not hear the sound of his own voice.

The boys no longer looked hungrily toward the shore that had been the haven of their hopes. Since it was utterly out of the question for them to gain the bank, it could have no further attraction for them. Instead, both were staring aghast at the advancing flood, now only too near by, and rolling down upon them with a swiftness that was appalling.

Andy's greatest fear was that the raft might either be struck by one of those churning logs or else completely capsized when it came under the influence of the first high roller. He believed that if only they could survive this attack there might be a pretty fair chance for them to live thru the dreadful experience.

Perhaps even in that dread moment the boys may have given one fleeting thought toward the homes where the news of the catastrophe that had overwhelmed them must soon cast a blighting shadow. In imagination they could even see those they loved weeping with sorrow over their untimely fate; for perhaps the bodies of the unfortunate pair would never be recovered.

But if these melancholy thoughts did find lodgment in the mind of either they had to give immediate way to other things. Andy for one did not believe in giving up so easily; he had always meant to pattern his young life after such men as the heroic Captain Lawrence, who, stricken down on his own deck in battle, with his last words, ere yielding up his life, begged his gallant Jack tars never to give up the ship. And even if it was only a plain everyday raft they were clinging to, it meant just about the same thing in the end, Andy believed.

"Hold fast, Specs!" he whooped in the ear of his companion, as he saw that the fateful moment had arrived.

Really, to tell the truth, Specs needed no urging of this kind. He was clinging to his seat desperately, for both boys had flattened themselves face downward at the time Andy first started to make use of those friendly rope-ends. Besides, what with the buffeting afforded by his bonds, it would seem as if Specs must stay by the raft and share its fortunes, whatever they might turn out to be.

So the towering billow struck them. Specs would certainly never forget the feeling that seized upon him when he felt the raft bound wildly aloft, as if clutched by the unseen hands of a giant. As for Andy, he was struggling with might and main to prevent the clumsy affair from being upset. Did it turn turtle in the general turmoil, that indeed was bound to be a calamity, with poor Specs tied to what must then be the under side.

Perhaps that was why at the very last second Andy had managed to get out his pocketknife, open the biggest blade, and hold it between his strong teeth. If the worst came, and he could manage it, he must have meant to cut Specs free, and take desperate chances trying to buoy the other up while keeping his own head above the surface of the heaving waters.

Good old Andy! No fellow had a more loyal and devoted chum than he proved himself to be.

Possibly the adventurous swimmer who took his life in his hands and went thru the famous Whirlpool Rapids at Niagara Falls may have experienced much the same sensations that came to the two boys on that raft, amidst the agitated waters of the flood from the burst dam.

When describing it later on, Andy could only say that it seemed as if they were thrown into the midst of fiercely battling currents, each writhing and twisting like monsters in the throes of mortal combat; and that it was only the kindness of Providence that kept them from being drowned by the heavier and tossing logs carried along on the foam-crested advance of the flood.

Andy maintained his grip with a tenacity that all the tugging and buffeting of the raging, tumultuous waters could not overcome. He had a sort of bulldog nature, did Andy, and once he had taken hold he was likely to keep his grasp no matter what happened.

He plucked up a little more courage when, after they had met the initial rush of the roaring flood, he found that so far the timbers of the raft had held and kept its original position. But would they escape final disaster?

This thrilling story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

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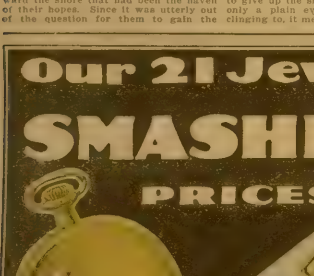

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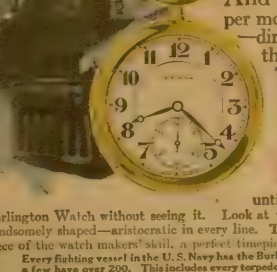

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Unmanly Wisdom.

"What worries me," moaned the tobacconist's best paying customer, "is that that boy of mine is a regular sissy. He'd rather play with girls than boys any time. The other day my wife said, 'Ajax, you'll either play with those boys who have come to play with you, or you'll come into the house!' And Ajax answered, 'All right, mamma, I'll come in the house.'

"Now, what do you know about that? Here were seven boys all lined up. They had come over to play with him, and in another part of the yard were three little girls with whom Ajax elected to disport himself. He loves to play with the girls, but he'd rather come in the house than play with the boys."

"Well," answered the tobacconist, "if that's all you have to worry about you're lucky. Your boy has good sense. If I had my life to live over again girls would be my companions all the time and never boys.

"Boys must shiver [illegible] some icy creek [illegible] at a time, tie one another's clothes in knots, steal watermelon, eat green apples and pull a lot of comedy just in order to be consistent. Later on it's cigarettes, billiards, pool, football and baseball, all of which manly sports are uncomfortable and unproductive. Very poor sport!"

"But," continued the best customer, "I want him to be manly. I have bought him baseballs and bats and footballs and boxing gloves and things like that. I want him to play with the boys and be rough. It disappoints me when he would rather stick in the house and sew a seam than play with his equals."

"Well, I wouldn't let it disappoint me," returned the tobacconist, as he threw the best customer's quarter into the cash drawer. "What were those boys lined up there for? One wanted to play with Ajax's bat and another wanted his ball, while another wanted to bat him on the beak with the boxing gloves."

"There's that boy next door to me. He never played baseball at all, but you ought to see him play croquet! He's a regular demon at croquet! An assassin! He plays an awful game of crokinole, too, and he is gladiator at tiddledywinks! Later on he will be the ping-pong champion of the city, then tennis will get him and finally golf.

"When the roughnecks have dislocated their fingers playing baseball and scarred themselves with shinny, duck on the rock, hog pile, soakie, bottle, drive the peg, strong back, pool and a shake for the drinks, your boy will still be intact. His language will be English and his manners will be polite, and his long acquaintance with the fair sex will give him a fair chance against them, an advantage which, goodness knows, we roughnecks never enjoyed."

Correct Form.

She was very anxious to learn all her new duties properly and to please her mistress. So, ladies, don't get excited: this is only a story.

"Please, mum," she said one morning as she cleared the breakfast table, "when I bring the dinner in, ought I to say, 'Dinner's ready,' or 'Dinner's served'?"

The mistress looked up coldly from her sewing.

"Well, if it's anything like it was last night, Mary," she said, firmly, "you'd better say: 'Dinner's spoiled!'"

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GENTLE JABS

As a rule a smart baby outgrows it.

Being a poet is terrible on a good appetite.

Even a quack doctor can relieve you of your coin.

There's very little to be gained by being a knocker.

Moral dyspepsia often goes about disguised as piety.

Matrimony may be synonymous with a job lot of trouble.

A woman can generate a lot of respect for himself.

A close friend is all right until he declines to lend you coin.

It's as easy to please an enemy as it is not to please a friend.

A soft answer may turn away wrath, but it doesn't pay debts.

A woman studies her mirror to [illegible] of her heart.

Only one-third or less of what a man positively knows is the truth.

Some feminine complexions resemble small boys; they won't wash.

There seem to be a good many misdeals in the game of matrimony.

For reasons unnecessary to mention, some people never have brain fag.

If a man wants to show off he has certain advantages away from home.

Weigh some men and you'll find them wanting in everything—except weight.

If you are in a small place it may be because you will not fit in a big place.

And when you reach your bottom dollar you still have the foundation of a fortune.

The man who always gets what he wants usually makes a noise like a bank roll.

Note the evil results of smoking, as illustrated by the volcano; it constantly suffers from eruptions.

There are men who would not kick an enemy when he was down—preferring to jump on him with both feet.

Every man would soon become wealthy if he could liquidate his financial obligations by paying compliments.

Don't think that by being miserable here on earth you will be any happier in heaven—if you happen to get there.

If our neighbors would only do things as we think they should be done, how much easier it would be to love them.

Doubtless the way of the transgressor is hard, but the people who travel thereon never seem to get very lonesome.

Statistics show that the average woman would rather draw a blank in the matrimonial lottery than to take no chance at all.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

Embroidery on everything wearable will be the mode this spring. Embroidery on dresses, hats, bags and even parasols will be in style.

There is something so likable and so generally becoming in the straight lines and cuirasslike bodices of the Moyen Age period that it is likely we shall wear frocks of that style this spring.

The rivalry of the one-piece frock and the coat and skirt still continues, so that it is an interesting conjecture whether by spring the frock will have conquered or the suit regained its original popularity.

In quite a few of the new models we find glorified aprons of silk and velvet—and what an admirable method they do provide for hiding the most of us limited folk who have to make over our old clothes. Just button one of these slips around the neck, let it fall over the skirt of last year's frock, and we are in the calcium spotlight of fashion.

The new suits are so good looking that they will win their spurs this spring and attract as much attention as the gowns. To begin with they have borrowed the most likable features from the passing costumes, a certain informality that does not detract from their serious purpose in the wardrobe, but does give them a trig, business-like air that invariably appeals to the American woman.

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

To prevent picture frames from making ugly marks on your wall, glue on the back of the frame at each corner a thin piece of cork.

Add cup of salt to one quart gasoline, shake well. Lay soiled garment on blotting paper, wet cloth with mixture and rub garment.

To remove a rusty screw, apply a hot iron to its head for a few minutes and then remove it in the usual way with a screwdriver. The screw will then come out easily.

Most housewives use the broom dish cloth, made of cord attached to a handle, which is very convenient indeed, but the old method of immersing the arms to the elbows.

Linen stored in a closet warm and poorly ventilated will soon become yellow and will crack earlier than if stored otherwise. The properly ventilated linen closet should be in a cool, dry place.

Every woman has experienced the annoyance of [illegible] in her work bag. Take a cork of medium size and cover a covering of some dainty colored silk—leaving the paper stiffness of the cork. Slip the points of the scissors into the cork and thus protect your work bag.

NEEDLEWORK NOTES.

A hot-water bag often proves to be the friend in need, and if possible one should provide a suitable dress for it. One seen recently was made of pink flannel embroidered with a simple wreath in pink and green.

To make a novel collar-and-cuff box, cover a cylinder-shaped rolled oats box with cretonne, and line the inside of box with cheesecloth or cotton that will harmonize with the cretonne used. The cretonne can be put on plain or gathered; sew in pockets on the inside for collar and cuff buttons.

Bags are not always as ornamental as they are useful, but by exercising a little ingenuity one can construct a pretty bag from unbleached muslin and cretonne. Line the bag with pink or blue sateen. For the bottom of the bag take a piece of cretonne, shape the top of it into three large scallops and apply it, scalloped part up, to the bag with braid.

HEALTH NOTES.

The unpleasant taste of castor oil can be avoided by putting orange juice in the bottom of the glass then very carefully pouring the oil down the side of the glass and adding orange juice on top.

When the eyes begin to settle back in the head it is due to a wasting away of the fatty cushion back of the eyes. Massage will not help this condition. You must build up the general health. Eat nutritious food, drink milk or cream between meals, take a brisk walk every morning and sleep in a well-ventilated room.

A camphorated bath is refreshing and leaves a pleasant odor on the skin. Pour slowly into a basin of water sufficient of the lotion to make the water look milky and sponge body with it. Tincture of benzoin, one-half ounce; tincture of camphor, one ounce; cologne, two ounces. Shake well and it is ready for use. The cleansing bath with soap and water should, of course, be taken first.

RECIPES.

SALTED ALMONDS.—Cover one-fourth pound almonds with boiling water and let stand three or four minutes. Drain, cover with cold water and let stand two minutes. Again drain, rub off skins, and dry between towels. Put one-third cupful olive oil in a very small saucepan. When hot put in one-fourth of the almonds and fry until delicately browned, stirring constantly to keep almonds in motion. Remove with a spoon or small skimmer, taking up as little oil as possible. Drain on brown paper and sprinkle with salt. Repeat until all are fried. It may be necessary to remove some of the salt, which may be accomplished by wiping with a piece of cheesecloth. Half lard and half clarified butter may be used in place of olive oil.

RAISIN ROLL.—One cupful of raisins, one-half cupful of orange juice, one-half teaspoonful salt, one-half cupful sugar, one cupful English walnuts, two tablespoonfuls crisco, one teaspoonful cinnamon. Cream crisco and sugar, add orange juice, raisins and nuts. Roll sufficient pastry for one pie in thin sheet, spread with the raisin mixture, roll up like jelly roll; and bake in hot oven. Serve with rich sauce.

DISCONTENTED WIVES.

The life of the average husband and father must be a monotonous monotonous existence. But men seem to be so made that they can do the same things over and over again endlessly and without complaint. Perhaps it is their nature, perhaps the result of long generations of patient breadwinning.

Women are different. I suppose most women would like everything in their lives changed once a year. And I know some who would tear up all roots oftener than that. Kathleen Morris writes in the Pictorial Review: One thing that holds us so tenderly to the children is that they change so constantly; last year's camera pictures are not this year's, and the pictures of a few years ago already give us a little pang at the heart. They were babies—they are boys and girls—and in a soon they will be men and women, and bottles and cribs and skates and school books gone forever.

So the children are safe in our hearts, and, for the houses—well, we move and shift and replace as much as the family temper and income will permit.

But the man of the house comes in spiritual rut. Being a man, he will never changes, nor sees the need for change. Being a woman, his wife eyes him patiently, or nervously, or indignantly, as her nature decrees, and looks forward with a sort of terror to the long, unaltering years to come. He has no further surprises for her, and as the years go by, his virtues are taken more and more for granted, and his faults are more and more evident. He is good, of course; he is kind and true, but he tells jokes that she has heard seventy times, he never touches fish, and he is funny when his feet get wet! She feels that she could endure violence and neglect for a while, anything for a change!

This would be funny if it were not so tragic. The tragedy comes in because, at the last census, nearly one out of every twelve were divorced, and statistics already indicate that at the next census the proportion will be even more serious. So that we know that hundreds of thousands of men and women who loved each other once have come to coldness and bitterness, and the end.

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THE JEWEL.

Ping Pong was a pretty little Japanese, with smooth black hair and dark brown eyes, and a dress all covered with spots—not accidental spots, but round red and black spots that were meant to be there. She was good and sweet and she worked all day selling flowers and took care of her mother, who was old. Every one said there was no one like Ping Pong, and they brought her chrysanthemums and helped her to carry her baskets and did what they could for her. Ping Pong thought the world was all full of good people until the summer when Toko came to the town where she lived.

Toko was a great prince, rich and famous, and when he arrived everything was excitement, and the people hung ropes of flowers thru the streets and made everything as festive as they possibly could.

Ping Pong was eager to see the great Prince Toko, of whom she had heard so much, and she wore her prettiest gown and filled her flower stand with the gayest flowers she could find.

She waited, all expectant, for the magnificent procession to come, for all the great people in town were to escort Toko to the home of the most important citizen. At last the procession approached, and Ping Pong hardly looked at the first comers, gay tho they were, she was so eager to see the great Toko.

And at last he came—but what a disappointment it was to anxious little Ping Pong! Instead of the gay noble she expected to see, smiling cordially upon all who had prepared the decorations in his honor, there sat in the carriage a man who seemed all out of harmony with the bright sunshine and flowers—a man solemn and gloomy—frowning, almost—and not hearing the happy shouts of the people. Little Ping Pong's heart fell as she looked at him.

Just at that moment a new trouble arose, for as she looked at Toko one of the riders who accompanied his carriage came dashing over to where Ping Pong stood, and in an instant his prancing horse had upset the little flower stand, scattered the flowers far and wide, and broken some of the vases, which were among Ping Pong's most precious possessions. Poor little Ping Pong gasped in dismay, but the rider never stopped, and the great Toko never turned his head to see what had caused the commotion.

Ping Pong went home in an unhappy and rather indignant frame of mind and told her mother what a disappointment Toko was and that he had never looked at the flowers prepared in his honor or the dress with the red and black spots, and that she had never seen in all her life one who looked so gloomy when all around was merriment. In fact, she felt so cross that she really wondered at herself, for usually she was cheerful, even when things went wrong, and at last she said, "I must go and listen to my magic box. I am really too unpleasant to talk to any one."

Her old grandmother, before she died, had given her a little box all inlaid in bright colors and had told her to listen to its wisdom whenever she felt angry or unhappy. And Ping Pong had never felt angry or unhappy before and had almost forgotten her grandmother's words. But this day she remembered, and going to her room she opened the little box and held it to her ear. At first she heard nothing, but soon a dreamy feeling came over her, and she leaned back on her couch and fell fast asleep. And as she slept she heard two voices and seemed to see two men sitting close together in an arbor.

And one said, "That jewel alone is worth a king's ransom. We must seek nothing else."

"But he will guard it well," replied the other.

"By no means," answered the first. "He thinks no one knows that he owns it, and it has a dull blue look to it that would not attract any one who did not know its worth. He will keep it in the cabinet in the parlor they have provided for him at the great house, and tonight while he dines we will push our way in and make off with it. Toko can spare it."

And at that Ping Pong awoke with a start and wondered why she had been dreaming. As it all came back to her she hardly knew what to think. It was only an idle dream, perhaps; yet her grandmother had been learned in magic and she felt there must be truth in what she had learned from the little magic box. It seemed that there was a conspiracy to rob Toko of a precious jewel—should she warn him? He would hardly believe the nonsensical story she had to tell him, and besides, she was afraid of him after his gloomy entry into the town.

At last little Ping Pong came to a desperate resolve. She would go herself to the great house where Toko was staying, gain entrance somehow, and while he dined she would guard the room where the jewel was kept so that she could give warning in case the robbers came.

So at dusk she took a basket of flowers and made her way to the house of the most important man in the place. And as she came near a servant ran out to her and said, "That is just what we want! We are a little short of flowers, since some that were promised have not arrived. If you will go in the head butler will buy them from you," and she hurried Ping Pong into the house.

Ping Pong went into the great dining-room, where her flowers were gladly received. When she left the room her heart beat fast, for instead of leaving, as they expected her to do, she knew she must find some place to hide until Toko and his suite should go to dine. She found a hiding-place behind a screen, and there she stayed until Toko passed, still solemn and unhappy, followed by his court.

Then little Ping Pong slipped into the parlor, where there was just a pearly light stealing in thru the open window. She looked around for the cabinet of which the robbers had spoken, and found it at one end of the room.

"Now suppose," she said, "I take the jewel and keep it until the robbers have gone. Then I will not need to alarm the house if they come and explain all about how I happen to be here." You see little Ping Pong was very much afraid of Toko!

So she opened the cabinet and looked for the jewel, but could find none. Just as she was about to close it, however, her eye fell on a dull blue stone about the size of a robin's egg.

"That is it!" she said, remembering what the men had said, and she took the jewel and quickly hid behind another screen.

For what seemed a long time she waited; then she heard footsteps. Peeping out, she saw one of the men she had dreamed about creeping cautiously into the room. He went at once to the cabinet, searched it thoroly, and then looked into all the cupboards and boxes in the room. With a low exclamation of disappointment he turned and hastened to escape.

Ping Pong was just about to return the jewel to its place and hurry away, when she heard some one else coming, and so she [illegible] stayed quietly in her hiding place.

But this time—to her consternation—it was Toko himself who entered and went straight to the cabinet. And when he

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opened it and felt hastily for the stone, she scarcely dared to breathe.

"Gone!" he cried, and there was such despair in his voice that Ping Pong was about to run out and give him the jewel, when she discovered to her amazement that instead of a dull blue stone she was holding one that was bright red and glowing like fire.

He heard her gasp of surprise and, hurrying to the screen, discovered little Ping Pong sitting on the floor.

"What does this mean?" he asked, so sternly that Ping Pong could scarcely answer.

"I came," she managed to say, "to guard your jewel. There was one who came to steal it."

"I know, I know," Toko answered. "We saw him hurry away. And he took my jewel!"

"No, I have it here," said Ping Pong, "but I scarcely dare show it to you. It is so changed."

"Changed!" Toko called in excitement. "How changed?"

And then Ping Pong held out the glowing jewel in her palm.

At that every trace of sorrow left Toko's face. "At last!" he cried. "I have waited years and years for this. The jewel was given me by my grandfather, who charged me to marry only her at whose touch this jewel should glow like fire. And I have searched the land over to find her, till at last I have grown gloomy with my long quest and could think of nothing else. Even today I could scarcely hear the shouts of the people, so distraught was I, and I knew not what happened on my way here. But now at last I have found my queen!"

And then Ping Pong forgot all about her magic box and her flower stand, and they both went down to the banquet hall and Toko made a wonderful speech, explaining everything to the people and they all welcomed Ping Pong as Queen, and shouted with joy, for all loved Ping Pong as soon as they saw her.

The wedding was wonderful and gorgeous—just the kind of a celebration Ping Pong loved—and she wore the jewel in her hair, where it glowed and glowed and brightened everything around her.

* * *

In Bloody Mary's Days.

(Continued From Page 17.)

ham," was the answer. "Now come with me."

Blunderblade hesitated.

"Get in front of me," commanded Tyrus. "I told Mistress Blunderblade that if I found you running at large like an unmuzzled dog I'd fetch you to her."

"But I don't care to see the woman after our little difficulties," whined Jack.

"See her you shall, or my name's not Tyrus."

Jack set his jaws hard and tramped on in front of Tyrus, who now and then smiled as he trod in his footsteps. The two soon turned into another street, and Tyrus halted at a small house which, from the light beyond the curtain, appeared to be inhabited.

"Is she in there?" whimpered Jack.

"You shall see in a minute," was the reply.

Tyrus, still keeping his eye on his prisoner, rapped lightly on the door, which was cautiously opened. A little cry from a woman's lips hailed Blunderblade's appearance. The bully hesitated, but the hand of Tyrus pushed him forward and, stumbling on the step, he fell sprawling on the floor.

The little pale-faced woman of the house uttered another cry and turned toward Tyrus.

"Where did you get the oaf?" she queried.

"Picked him up on the street. Is this the gentleman Blunderblade?"

"'Tis he," was the answer, as Jack got upon his feet and encountered the gaze of his wife.

There was the shadow of a smile in her eyes.

"I'm glad you caught the mullet," she said, addressing Tyrus. "I have the papers ready. All he has to do is to sign a confession that he tried to murder his wife. A pretty outcome to our married life! Sit down at yon table, Jack."

The big fellow looked quarrelsome.

"It's no use," pursued the little woman.

"That's it," said Tyrus, "and when he has signed the confession I'll write out another one which shall have an oath appended."

Biting his lip to the quick, Blunderblade dropped into a chair, every vestige of his courage gone. The confession, already written, was spread before him, and with a growl which showed his feelings he scrawled his name across the sheet.

"Now for my bit o' business," said Tyrus, and in a few moments he had written out an oath to the effect that Captain Jack should cease to trouble Gilbert and should cross London Bridge that night, never more to trouble them with his presence.

"I can't sign this," he growled, showing his teeth like a hyena.

"Sign, or the sword!" hissed Tyrus at his ear. "We are not going to have a wolf like you at our heels. If you break your oath we'll make a seraph out of you in a jiffy."

Blunderblade wrote his famous name below the oath, and ten minutes later a big figure slipped across London Bridge.

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